

# The interorganisational trust process in the Flemish judicial youth care chain:

Perceived trustworthiness, its inputs, and willingness to exchange information

**Marloes CALLENS**

Proefschrift aangeboden tot het verkrijgen van de  
graad van Doctor in de Sociale Wetenschappen

Promotor: Prof. Dr. Geert Bouckaert

Copromotor: Prof. Dr. Stephan Parmentier

Onderzoekseenheid: Instituut voor de overheid

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De verantwoordelijkheid voor de ingenomen standpunten berust alleen bij de auteur.

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## List of abbreviations

	<i>Original Dutch</i>	<i>English translation</i>
<i>IOR</i>	/	<i>Interorganisational relationships</i>
<i>IYC</i>	<i>Decreet integrale jeugdhulp</i>	<i>Integrated youth care act</i>
<i>OCJ</i>	<i>Ondersteuningsdienst jeugdzorg</i>	<i>Youth care support centre</i>
<i>OMJ</i>	<i>Openbaar ministerie – sectie jeugdzaken</i>	<i>Juvenile public prosecutor's office</i>
<i>SDJ</i>	<i>Sociale dienst voor gerechtelijke jeugdhulp</i>	<i>Social service for judicial youth care</i>
<i>VK</i>	<i>Vertrouwenscentrum kindermishandeling</i>	<i>Confidential centre on child abuse and neglect</i>



# Chapter 1 Introduction to the research problem

Establishing a well-functioning judicial system is often accompanied by a balancing act between several, often conflicting, demands imposed by various stakeholders. Moreover, a justice system, such as the Belgian one, consists of an extensive network of organisation, which, as a whole, ensures the rule of law in the Belgian democratic constitutional state. Management of such system can be challenging to meet the needs of the individual organisations and of the various stakeholders. There is an increased demand for efficient, fast, and economical functioning, and at the same time, there is a call for thorough investigations, for documenting an extensive administrative trail, and for including more parties into the process. Another tension exists between, on the one hand, the need for checks and balances and the highest form of impartiality, and on the other hand, the need for close cooperation between the different judicial organisations. There is also a need for more external control on the functioning of the judicial actors, clashing with the important value of trust in the independent discretionary power. Similarly, a call for more transparency from the judicial system clashes with the importance of confidentiality and privacy. All these tensions put pressure on the functioning of this network of organisations, and this research will focus on whether and how the judicial network of interorganisational relations manages to function in a constructive manner given the tension put on the cooperation under these difficult circumstances. The focus will go to trust as a relational dimension between the organisations, which can influence successful cooperation.

## 1.1 Reasons for studying interorganisational trust in a judicial context

There are good reasons why studying interorganisational trust in a judicial context is important and valuable. The amount of cross-sectoral, interorganisational collaboration in the delivery of public social services is growing, and increasingly scholarly attention has been devoted to understanding the functioning of such alliances. Practitioners, as well as scholars, can benefit from a systematic investigation of what accounts for the performance of interorganisational alliances. Understanding the dynamics of collaboration will help organisations take proactive steps to address potential problems in the formation and functioning of interorganisational networks (Chen, 2010). Collaboration in such networks is not self-evident, since there are less reasons to come to the table, to work together on problem clarification and solutions, to reach agreements, and to follow through on implementation when people from different organisations are not in legally bounded authority relationships (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). In

a group of organisations, it is easy to be a free rider, because accountability does not lie with just one actor. Free riders are those who benefit from the provision of a common outcome without bearing any of the costs, or less than is required of them. Therefore, free-riding is a central concept within the ‘logic of collective action’ (Ostrom, 1998). The judicial system forms such a complex network of collaborations for public service delivery, but it is not extensively researched within the network cooperation literature. Meanwhile, judicial networks have a long-standing history of cooperating and with its specialisations and divisions of tasks, the justice system contains a large number of actors, where the organisational efficiency depends on the coordination between the different players. This makes it an interesting case to look at, with undoubtedly a depth of information about the functioning of interorganisational networks.

Moreover, the movement by trial courts to become more performance-oriented and responsive to user needs brought institutional changes that necessitate an increased study of court organisation. In the late 1960’s, scholars began studying trial courts as organisations, especially in the US (Ostrom et al., 2007; Shomade & Hartley, 2010), while less studies have taken place in a European context. Despite their long-standing alliance, successful cooperation cannot be taken for granted. For a long time, the efficiency of the Belgian justice system has been a serious point of concern among politicians and citizens. Past and current reforms bring with them an increased differentiation and a less hierarchical structure, which makes the coordination even more tedious.

The lack of academic interest in the judicial system as an exemplary case for network cooperation can be explained by its specificities, which make the judicial system an atypical case for network cooperation. The literature on network cooperation typically deals with voluntary networks, where organisations choose to cooperate with others because this will benefit them, and where networks can dissemble when the benefits no longer outweigh the costs. Judicial organisations are “condemned” to cooperate with one another by law and a legal professional cannot choose to deal with another organisation when they are, for example, not happy with the dealings of their counterpart, since they are geographically bounded to a particular judicial actor. Moreover, between the judicial organisations, there is a strict separation installed to ensure a fair and impartial handling of cases, and even the slightest appearance of partiality should be avoided at all costs to ensure public legitimacy. Therefore, the organisations cannot demand transparency or exercise control over one another. Furthermore, the stakes of the cooperation are high, and a failed cooperation can lead to severe consequences, for the individual litigant, as well as for the fairness and safety of society. Therefore, this network can be described as a high risk, high autonomy, and high interdependence public network. Other

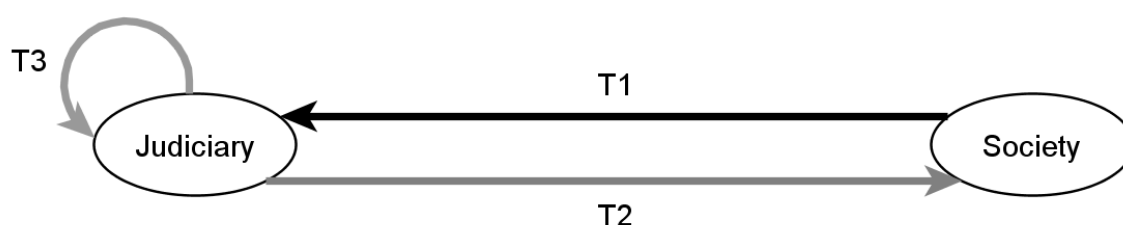
examples of such public service delivery chains with similar characteristics are public health organisations, public military and defence, municipal services, and public educational providers.

To ensure stable and efficient cooperation the literature suggests the importance of trust between organisations. Specifically for the judicial system, the characteristics of high risk, high autonomy, but high interdependency can all increase the need for trust and hamper the formation of trust. The importance of interorganisational trust has been suggested in many recent works, which covered both trust between private economic businesses (e.g. Du et al., 2011; Swift, 2001) and trust between public institutions (e.g. Bouckaert, 2012; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Research has shown that interorganisational trust can greatly facilitate smooth cooperation between organisations, which in turn can lead to important gains for the members of the organisations, the organisations themselves, the alliance, and society. According to Luhmann (1979) the main function of trust is to reduce social complexity and thereby making room for new complexities. For the individual employee, trust within and between partnering organisations contributes to the well-being of the individual (Helliwell & Huang, 2011) and increases work satisfaction (R. M. Kramer, 2002). On the organisational level, trust is often seen as an important factor of the social capital of the organisation – the non-materialistic capital an organisation can possess – that offers a clear benefit to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation (Andrews, 2010). Seppänen, Blomqvist, & Sundqvist (2007) collected benefits from a private sector point of view, where interorganisational trust is believed to facilitate open communication, information sharing, and conflict management; to increase predictability, adaptability and strategic flexibility; to reduce transaction costs, such as management costs and internalisation costs; to pave the way for informal network collaboration and collaborative innovation; and to advance business performance and give sustainable competitive advantage. Moreover, it can speed up work processes (Adams et al., 2010), promote cross-boundary knowledge and information sharing (Chen et al., 2014), lower the need for controlling the other organisation, with reduced costs for control (Dyer & Chu, 2003), enable to focus on core tasks by each organisation (Claro et al., 2003; Girmscheid & Brockmann, 2009), and increase joint action and commitment (Hausman & Johnston, 2010). Trusting relations between boundary spanners also have been associated with easier negotiations (Currall & Judge, 1995). Dodgson (1993) suggests that trust is necessary for the sustainability of network collaborations and that trust is imperative to create a viable environment for communication, organisational learning, and innovation. Das & Teng (1998) argue that the trust building process eliminates pitfalls and hindrances stemming from diversity of actors – a reality of most collaborative networks.

Conversely, distrust has been assumed to cause a lack of cooperation, avoidance of interaction, unwillingness to share views and preferences, information distortion, disbelief, hostility towards distrusted others, and intractable group conflicts (Bijlsma-Frankema, Weibel, & Sitkin, 2006).

The presence of interorganisational trust should never be taken for granted since such fragile relational state can be broken by a myriad of factors occurring in relationships between organisations. Das & Teng (1998, p. 495) state that “trust is not for free: trust building is a planned activity and takes considerable resources from organizations”. Trust-building should be an ongoing process nurturing relationships among network participants, which in turn results in longer, more effective, and more productive results (Bryson et al., 2006). Trust will be a way to improve the conditions between the involved parties of the involuntary network cooperation, rather than keeping them together. It could be expected that it is hard to develop trust between organisations that are forced to work together, highly dependent on each other for reaching a high stakes goal, but have little to no authority over one another. In a judicial network the organisations differ on many aspects, while trust is often based on value congruence (Cazier et al., 2007) or similarities and familiarities (Gulati & Sytch, 2008). Given the importance of trust on the performance of cooperation, it is advisable that trust optimisation is at the forefront of reform initiatives for the institutions of justice. However, because of the system of checks and balances, a certain degree of distrust is also an important condition for the performance of the judicial system, making trust a challenging issue in this context.

Based on the model of Bouckaert (2011) on trust in the context of public administration three clusters of trust relationships can be distinguished for the judiciary. The first, T<sub>1</sub>, focuses on trust of society and its citizens in the judiciary, the second, T<sub>2</sub>, relates to trust of the judiciary in society, and the third, T<sub>3</sub>, encompasses trust of the actors of the judiciary in relation to each other.



*Figure 1 The different forms of trust in and from the judiciary*

In current discussions on the organisation of the judiciary, trust already has an important influence; however, it is the public trust in the judiciary (T<sub>1</sub>) that takes the lead in these debates,

through research on public opinion and public attitudes regarding the justice system. Rightfully, trust of the citizens in the justice system is an important factor that can alter the success and/or failure of this system and trust is a necessary condition for the legitimacy and the effectiveness of the judicial system (Hough et al., 2010). Nevertheless, the argument at the basis of this research project is that interorganisational trust between the different entities constituting the judicial system can equally affect the performance of the judicial chain. Since applying jurisdiction is not an exact science, the process is influenced by many relational factors, such as communication and cooperation (Beyens, 2000; Franssens et al., 2010), both influenced by the amount of trust in a relationship (Van Oortmerssen, 2013). The current project will therefore focus on an aspect that has remained in the shade: trust within the judiciary itself (T<sub>3</sub>). The judicial system has so far not been involved in this research line, despite the concern that past and present reform proposals have emphasised the importance of public trust and neglected the importance of interorganisational trust (Bouckaert, 2012, 2013). Possibly, reforms for achieving a higher level of public trust create a lower level of interorganisational trust. For example, when more audits and more controls are installed, more suspicion can be raised among the different organisational partners. In addition, it is not inconceivable that interorganisational trust (T<sub>3</sub>) will be reflected in the public trust (T<sub>1</sub>), in the sense that internal problems of the judicial system can affect the external perception of the system by the general public. On the other hand, too much trust will be also not be advisable since each actor needs to remain critical of the others.

It is theorised that trust will be of a specific nature in every other context (Costa, 2003), which makes it difficult to make assumptions on the nature of interorganisational trust in the judicial context based on theories and measurements of other contexts. Therefore, an exploration of the nature of interorganisational trust within this specific research context is a necessary first stage of involving this context in the research line of interorganisational trust.

## 1.2 Introducing the research project and (initial) research questions

This project is part of the 'Justice and Populations' study, an Interuniversity Attraction Pole (IAP) programme of the Belgian science policy office (Belspo). It belongs to the work package on 'The State Justice System'. The aim of the 'Justice and Populations' study is to examine the agency of collective judicial actors in Belgium and the study of the intellectual, social, and professional networks of justice. Both the structure and functioning of the state justice system are shaped by constant interactions between institutional actors at various levels of the judicial

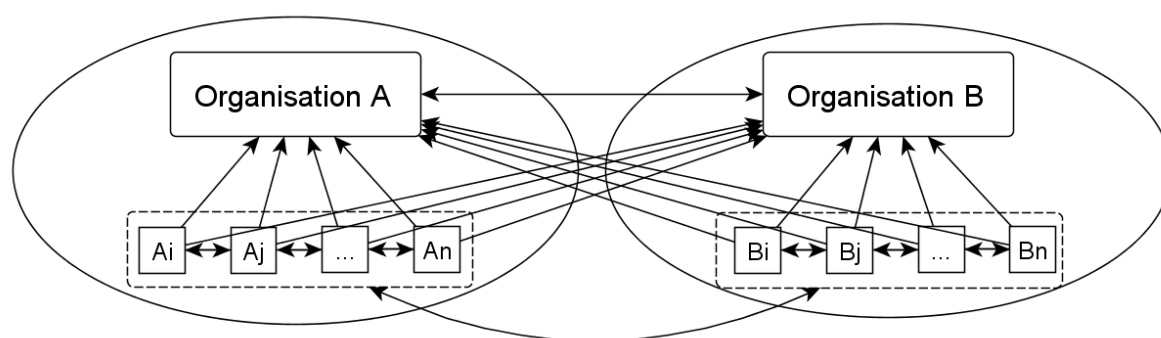
chain, and these are in turn, subject to change and reform because of varying public demands and attitudes towards justice<sup>1</sup>.

The current research project will make ground for a discussion on the importance of interorganisational trust between the actors of the judicial chain. Given that this will be, to our knowledge, the first exploration of interorganisational judiciary trust, both nationally and internationally, the goals are to understand how trust is experienced in this context. Since the judicial system is an extremely complex and voluminous organisation the focus will go to a segment of this system, namely the network dealing with judicial youth protection.

The central aims of this project are:

1. To detect what the current levels of trust and/or distrust between the organisations involved in the judicial youth protection system are;
2. To understand how the level of interorganisational trust and/or distrust can best be measured for the judicial youth protection system in Belgium;
3. To unveil the nature of interorganisational trust and/or distrust within the judicial youth protection system.

To reach this goal interorganisational judicial trust will need to be defined and the mechanisms through which interorganisational judicial trust works need to be understood. Studying trust on an interorganisational level requires the development of a multilevel definition of trust (Chan, 1998). The objects to be observed are the individual members of the judicial youth protection chain, which are aggregated at the organisational level, as shown in Figure 2.



*Figure 2 The multilevel structure of interorganisational trust*

The contribution of this study lies in revealing a comprehensive picture of the trust process in a judicial context, a long-term cooperating dyad. These insights are useful to understand why

<sup>1</sup> A full overview of the activities taking place within the Justice and Populations IAP-project and the different partners involved can be found on the official website of the project: [www.bejust.be](http://www.bejust.be)



networks succeed or fail, and what network managers should take into account when aiming for durable and high trusting relationships in which partners behave in a trustworthy manner. The societal contribution of the research lies in mapping out the situation in the judicial system regarding trust, and offering tools for controlling the levels of trust between the organisations. A better understanding of the trust process can help understand whether trust is beneficial for more efficient and effective judicial service delivery, or whether trust is counterproductive, since other values such as impartiality, independence, and confidentiality can be jeopardised when others are blindly trusted. In other words, the goal of the research is to deliver input for informing and strengthening interorganisational cooperation between operational entities (horizontal trust) in a judicial context.

The dissertation will be structured as follows; Chapter 2 will give an overview of the current state of the trust literature. In Chapter 3, the case will be introduced in detail together with the surrounding legal framework under which they operate. In Chapter 4, the preliminary exploration is described, where also the scope of the project will be given, with the argumentation why specific choices are made in the demarcation of the field, and the specific research questions the project envisions to answer will be specified. In Chapter 5, the applied methodology to find an answer to these questions will be described in detail. The results of the exploration will be presented in Chapter 6, Chapter 7, and Chapter 8, together with a discussion of these results in light of the existing theory. The conclusions drawn from the entire study will be given in Chapter 9.

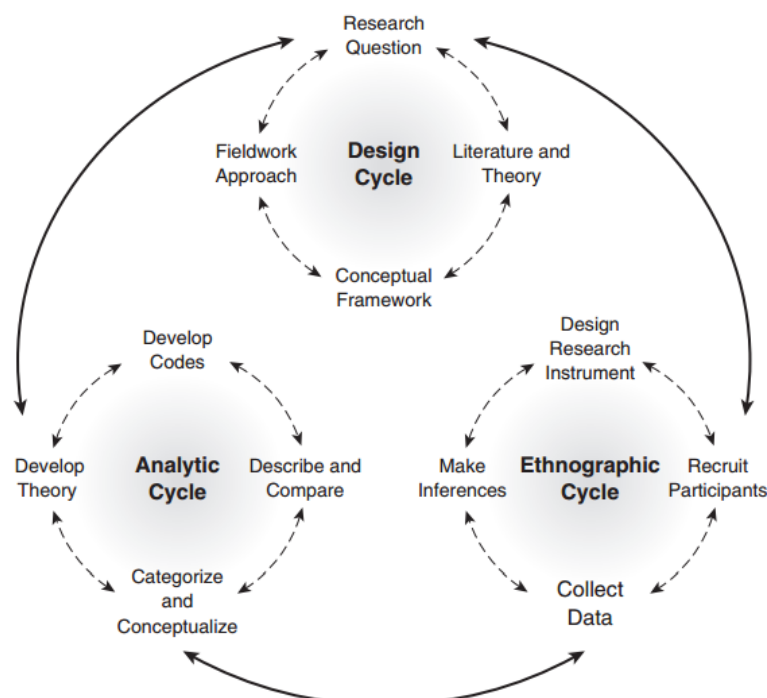


## Chapter 2   Theoretical                      background                      on interorganisational cooperation and trust

In this chapter, the theoretical background surrounding the research problem of interorganisational trust in a context of judicial cooperation is presented. First, the concept of interorganisational cooperation will be introduced. Since trust represents only one dimension of interorganisational cooperation an introduction of the broader concept of cooperation is deemed useful, to better differentiate trust from other dimensions of cooperation. The intricacies specific to judicial cooperation will also be highlighted, differentiating it from other types of interorganisational cooperation. Cooperation and trust are terms used in many disciplines such as management, psychology, sociology, business, and public policy, and is approached from many theoretical perspectives such as population ecology, transaction cost economics, social exchange theory, institutional theory, industrial marketing, and resource dependence theory. In this chapter, the literature is reviewed interdisciplinary, combining these various perspectives as much as possible.

The existing literature on interorganisational trust and cooperation will be reviewed in a generalist manner, without going into detail about specific empirical evidence existing on the research questions. The research does not start from a specific theoretical assumption or from testable hypotheses, but is rather set up to develop new insights into the mechanisms of the trust process in an interorganisational setting, and the study has a predominant exploratory, inductive character. Trust has not been explored in a judicial context and there is no reason to assume findings in other contexts will also apply to the judicial context. The goal is to start the exploration with an open and unbiased view to discover new findings and develop new theoretical insights. Therefore, it is important to set out the general field and the concepts that will be focused on, rather than specific variables that might be discovered in the empirical section, since the direction will be dictated by the progress during the research process. After analysis of the data, the results will be linked back to the literature to evaluate how these findings coincide, contradict, or complement prior empirical findings. At that stage, a focussed review of prior research will be performed based on the findings in the study. From the literature, information is gathered on cooperation between organisations and how trust could be defined, however, this knowledge is only partial and will be refined and complemented with first-hand information from the actors. Given this setup, the study balances between a deductive

and an inductive approach, and the research followed a cyclic movement between the two approaches, as best represented by Hutter and Hennick's qualitative research cycle (Hennink et al., 2010) (see Figure 3). This cycle acknowledges the cyclical nature of research and exists of three interlinked cycles: the design cycle (conceptual phase), the ethnographic cycle (data collection), and the analytic cycle (data analysis). These are not followed sequentially, but the researcher continually alternates between the different cycles.



*Figure 3 Hutter-Hennink qualitative research cycle presenting how theory and empirics succeed one another in a cyclical dynamic (source: Hennink et al., 2010, p. 4)*

## 2.1 Interorganisational cooperation

Cooperation between organisations occurs in many domains, in the private as well as in the public sector. The interest towards studying interorganisational relationships can be traced back to the introduction of the open systems view of organisations, abandoning the belief that organisations are closed and isolated systems. This view emerged in the mid-20th century, and has since spread rapidly among academics studying organisations (see e.g. Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). The interest in interorganisational cooperation has further grown due to the increased complexity of the goals organisations want to reach and the growing demands for economisation of means to reach these goals. These impulses push organisations to find new ways of cooperating with other organisations to come to solutions more fit for the increasingly complex issues that society and its citizens are facing. Hierarchical, rigid, and centralised structures of traditional government are considered ineffective to solve the current societal problems (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). This has been the case for the private sector, and for the

public sector under the impulse of 'new public management' and 'new public governance'. Exemplary of this evolution is the rise of structural terms such as *network governance*, *public service delivery chains*, and *public-private partnerships*. The main rationale behind utilisation of networks for service delivery has been the fact that organisations are interdependent actors whose results depend on the results of the others – no single organisation is capable of achieving its goal without collaborating with others (Klijn et al., 2000). Combining efforts between organisations can lead to **advantages** of efficiency and effectiveness. Collaborative advantage will be achieved when an objective is met that no single organisation could have produced on its own and when each organisation, through the collaboration, is able to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone (Huxham, 1993). In the public sphere collaboration is a tool to deliver better services (Klitgaard & Treverton, 2004). In addition, *institutional theory* stresses the importance of legitimacy for organisations; thus, organisations become part of a network to gain approval of others as well as to replicate best practices and minimise uncertainties (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

In this study, an interorganisational network is viewed as a set of organisations, from which two or more nodes are connected by interorganisational relationships (IOR). IOR's are formed between organisations that repeatedly interact with each other. A collection of IOR's form a network of organisations that is a goal-oriented social action system, inherently multidimensional, and typically includes formally structured arrangements for coordination between the involved parties (Ahola, 2009). Network governance entails a way of delivering public services and addressing public issues through collective action of multiple actors from different sectors and levels of government. It presents a more decentralised and non-hierarchical approach usually with specific emphasis on the autonomy of stakeholders involved (Kettl, 2005). The horizontal and egalitarian relationships without traditional command and control, and cessation of top-down arrangements are the main **characteristics** of a governance structure (Agranoff, 2006). Sound network governance requires a different approach than the management of separate organisations. Salamon & Elliott (2002) argue that governance emphasises enablement-skills as opposed to management-skills in previous paradigms. In other words, having multiple actors and relationships requires facilitation and fostering of interorganisational activities and operations for a more seamless and effective delivery of services instead of the hierarchical top-down steering of the activities. Kilduff & Tsai (2003) assume networks are goal-oriented interorganisational arrangements formalised and governed by an agreement among network participants. In other words, it is a matter of organisational commitment to the overall process that determines the level of formality of networks as well as

the level of interdependency and responsibility (Kamensky et al., 2004). They require frequent coordination and information exchange and have to be managed. They are a source of greater communication, coordination, and innovation if the participants of the interdependence are collaborative. The notion of interdependence is related to the concept and the degree of interconnectivity, which refers to the quality of connection between elements. The concept of interdependency will be used in the meaning of an action or event affecting another element, either on its result or on its process (Marle & Vidal, 2016). Networks mainly focus on joint efforts, resources and decision-making to produce a common product (Kamensky et al., 2004).

Collaboration may have **different forms** depending on the level of commitment, organisational preferences, structural restraints, and/or contextual factors. For instance, while cooperation might be enough to accomplish certain knowledge-based initiatives, large-scale, long-run and relatively formal engagements through combining resources and information exchange may be only effective and viable through collaborative partnerships and networks (Agranoff, 2006). Thompson et al. (2003) distinguish cooperation based on the interdependence between the actors, namely pooled, sequential, or reciprocal interdependence. *Pooled* interdependence is the loosest form where each organisational department or business unit performs completely separate functions. While departments may not directly interact and do not directly depend on each other in the pooled interdependence model, each does contribute individual pieces to the same overall puzzle. *Sequential* interdependence occurs when one unit in the overall process produces an output necessary for the performance by the next unit. Perhaps the most obvious example of sequential interdependence is an assembly line. The demand for coordination to prevent slowdown is greater than for pooled task interdependence. Scheduling and planning the organisation's resources in a sequential interdependence model is essential to efficient operations. *Reciprocal* interdependence is similar to sequential interdependence in that the output of one department becomes the input of another, with the addition of being cyclical. In this model, an organisation's departments are at their highest intensity of interaction. Reciprocal models are the most complex and difficult to manage. Wagner & Hollenbeck (2015) add the notion of comprehensive interdependence to this, which is the most dense and tight version of the network.

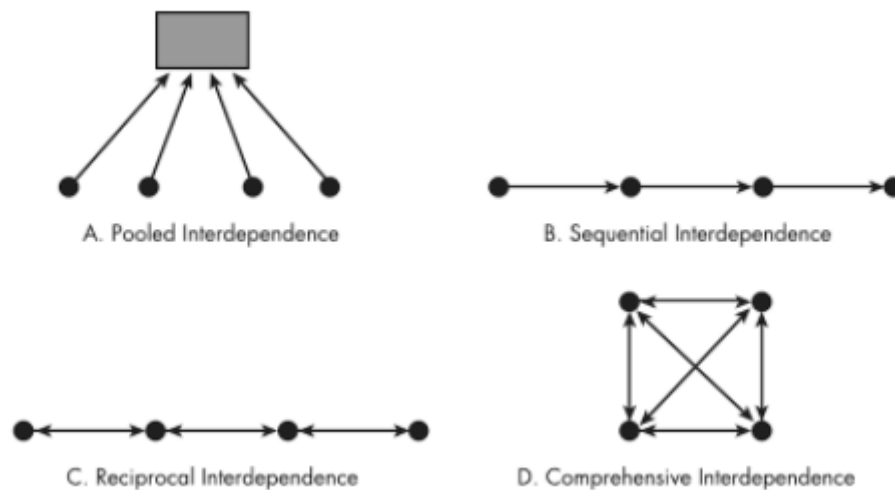


Figure 4 Types of interdependence (source: Wagner & Hollenbeck, 2015, p. 179)

While cooperation between different organisations is beneficial, there are also many **difficulties** and negative side effects that arise from it. They are a source of risks if this cooperative mode is not present or if the interdependency is not correctly managed. The risks for each organisation increase because they are now dependent on the other organisations. Collaboration in such networks is also not self-evident, since autonomous organisations will have to be motivated to put their efforts into negotiating, to work together on problem clarification and solutions, to reach agreements, and to follow through on implementation (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). In a group of organisations, it is easy to be a free rider, because accountability does not lie with just one actor but in the success of the collective action (Ostrom, 1998). Organisations tend to prioritise the tasks which are of primordial importance and for which they are accountable and, subsequently, benefit them most (Leat et al., 1999). Groups can have a common interest but an individual member can have no interest to ‘pay’ for the provision of that common interest. While rational models provide much insight, organisations are not only motivated by extrinsic rewards and incentives, and they are not fully rational, especially not in the case of multi-actor complexity (Molenveld, 2016; Ostrom, 1990). Wicked problems cut across institutional boundaries, and are accompanied by an increase in institutional uncertainty (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). There can be a clash between divergent institutional regimes, resulting in a high degree of uncertainty about how processes will be handled and how the interactions with the other actors will develop. This cannot be readily solved since institutional frameworks develop gradually and are deeply rooted in formal legal frames, informal institutions or long-term societal transition processes (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Because accountability is shared, this leads to a weakness owing to the lack of effective tools to correct system-wide errors because no specific agency or organisation is totally

responsible for the end result (Selsky & Parker, 2005). Unclear roles can emerge between the organisations in the partnerships. Performance evaluation is also difficult because the cooperation focusses on broader impacts and results rather than on specific outputs (Garayev, 2011). Securing cooperation from each involved organisation can be a challenge, because networks are not based on the legal authority paradigm, instead they are "structures of interdependence, involving multiple organisations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some hierarchical arrangement" (O'Toole Jr., 1997, p. 45).

#### 2.1.1 Cooperation within the judicial system

Cooperation in the justice system can be approached as a collaborative network, where there is a long-term (even indefinite) prospect of cooperation that is formalised by legislation, and where several actors are involved. The interdependency between these actors can be viewed as reciprocal or even **comprehensive**, because contrary to the often used term of a 'justice chain', in practice it is less a chain because cases can move back and forth within the chain, or circle through the chain several times. Regarding the juvenile justice chain, that functions as an instrumental case in this study to explore the trust process in a judicial context, the decision-making process towards a meaningful intervention requires extensive and up-to-date information on the background of the child, made timely available for each actor. Justice systems are neither equipped nor mandated to fulfil this intervention alone, and need to work hand in hand with the police and the social sector towards this end (UNICEF, 2013). Recent initiatives within the judicial child protection recognise the need for alignment and have called for a more collaborative approach to overcome fragmentation in service delivery and to provide adequate responses (e.g. Cohen, 2002; Howell et al., 2004; Wulczyn et al., 2010). In the absence of such intersectoral cooperation, juvenile justice interventions decrease the opportunity of supporting a sustainable change in the child's behaviour, circumstances, and environment. There is a strong delineation because the network is built around the achievement of a common goal, and the coordination of the network is centralised in Flanders thanks to a decree on integrated youth care.

Networks can be put on a scale between loosely coupled and tightly coupled networks, of which the judicial network fits into the tightly coupled form. They can be categorised as *collaborative* networks characterised by more formal and long-term interorganisational relationships with comprehensive and multilevel planning and clear communication channels directed towards achieving a common goal. Such networks entail **high risk** and require comprehensive



commitment with an understanding that each single network participant is not autonomous but a part of the general and common mission (Brown & Keast, 2003).

Most of the literature on network cooperation involves organisations that voluntarily choose to cooperate in order to reach a goal they otherwise reach less efficiently or not at all. They can also choose to exit the cooperation when they feel like nothing can be gained further from the cooperation, or when the other organisations are not trusted. In that case, they can also choose to cooperate with another party, possibly the competition, if this seems like a more trustworthy partner. In many policy domains, however, interorganisational cooperation is **not voluntary**, and there is no choice to exit a network. Generally, only one specific governmental department is responsible for a specific task in a certain region. They are predestined to cooperate without the possibility to separate, even when relations are irreparably damaged. As the collaborating partner is not chosen deliberately, the collaborative experience may be unproductive (Chen, 2010).

Past studies of trial courts exemplified the importance of organisational structure, the behaviour of court actors, and the way of interacting to achieve justice (Beyens, 2000). It can be seen as a linkage of **professional organisations**, such as the police, courts, and judicial social services that rely on highly trained professionals who demand autonomy in their work. There's a high degree of specialisation and decision making is decentralised (Mintzberg, 1983). In the judicial system, investigators and magistrates need to be completely independent beyond control to ensure objective investigations and ruling. The system of checks and balances incorporated in the judicial system ensures this autonomy, to ensure an independent handling of individual cases, and sufficient controls and divide of power to ensure impartial decision-making. At the same time, the court system is a process with a set of sequential tasks and activities linked together, concerning different participants. The process demands continuous and coordinated flow of a large number of individual and infinitely different types of cases. As such, judicial systems are organisations "balancing between the needs of independent professional work and effective mass-production processes" (Pekkanen et al., 2009, p. 222). The cooperating entities are in many ways distinct spheres, being the responsibility of separate ministries, with different internal structures and managerial cultures. Distributing the decision-making process between separate entities to increase the fairness of the judicial decision-making towards the citizenry remains important to safeguard the integrity of the procedures, but at the price of adding inefficiency. To ensure the efficiency loss is not problematic, good coordination between the entities should be continually strived for while guarding the boundaries between the entities to warrant a system of checks and balances. There is reluctance to coordinate this network as joint

partners because of the importance of maintaining separate organisations and carrying out this image to the public. There is a fear that increasing the process viewpoint and process performance will lead to unfavourable circumstances for professional work and thus weaken the quality of the decisions made (Pekkanen et al., 2009). As such, this makes for a complex cooperative model with high interdependence increasing the risk for each actor, and therefore the need for interorganisational trust for effective cooperation. Colquitt et al. (2011) found that trust in such high-reliability contexts could be different from trust in typical contexts.

#### 2.1.2 Interorganisational information sharing as interdependency

The main interaction between the organisations of the judicial youth protection chain is the **exchange of information**. Each organisation contributes particular pieces of information to the entire flow of information within the youth protection chain, creating high information interdependency. Information transfer from one entity to the other should be coordinated well (Hall et al., 1977; Howell et al., 2004; Rivard et al., 1999). Often the information one entity holds is a prerequisite for another organisation to be able to perform their tasks. Decision-making is therefore a social process in that the decision-makers use information provided to them by others (Beyens, 2000; Snizek & Van Swol, 2001). Of specific importance here is Simon's theory of *bounded rationality* that stresses the inability of one single actor to have complete and perfect information for decision-making, thus emphasising dependence and reliance on external sources of information (Simon, 1991).

Efficient interorganisational information sharing has been found to have many **benefits** for interorganisational cooperative structures. Throughout the scientific literature these have been mainly described for private partnerships, such as supply chains (e.g. Cheng, 2011) or marketing channels (e.g. Sezen & Yilmaz, 2007) where information sharing has the ability to reduce supply chain costs (Huang et al., 2003) and achieve competitive advantage (Shin et al., 2007). The exchange of information is also of great importance in a public service supply chain, such as the public healthcare system (e.g. Walker et al., 2005) and public child care where exchange of information serves the purpose of coordination, control, planning, evaluation, and client assessment (Howell et al., 2004; Rivard et al., 1999). Dawes (1996) sums up the claims of experienced public managers on the benefits of information sharing:

*Sharing supports better, more integrated planning, policy development, and program implementation across agencies; contributes to more comprehensive and accurate information for decision-making and problem solving; makes more productive use of increasingly scarce staff resources; and helps build positive interagency and professional relationships. (p. 391)*

Despite these benefits, sharing information between organisations can also be perceived as a **vulnerability** wherein the actors take a risk beyond the control of the own organisation. When information is shared there is the risk that information transferred between parties for specific professional purposes can be deliberately (or unintentionally) used by the receiving party for purposes outside of the intention and to the detriment of the party providing the information (Clemons & Hitt, 2004). Information exchange also drains the organisation of time and energy that could be applied for other organisational priorities. Vulnerability in interorganisational exchange is context-specific and varies according to the properties of exchange relations. Organisations become vulnerable to the extent that they take the risk of conducting exchange in uncertain environments and make investments for specific transactions that result in dependence (McEvily et al., 2003). Vulnerability raises the question whether a counterpart is likely to exploit the opportunity to take advantage of its exchange partner or, alternatively, act in good faith and pass up the opportunity for exploitation (McEvily et al., 2003).

Information exchange is **dependent** on organisational features such as organisational culture (Cheng, 2011), coordination policies and rules affecting the ability to process information. Moreover, individuals, within their organisational roles, affect the development of interagency relationships through establishing both professional and personal ties (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994).

## 2.2 Interorganisational trust

From the theory on interorganisational cooperation, it can be concluded that cooperation, and more specifically information exchange, between organisations, especially in complex networks with high interdependencies, is accompanied by vulnerabilities and risks for each of the involved organisations. Not all these vulnerabilities can be omitted through formal agreements between the partners because of the complexity and unpredictability of the uncertainties. To avoid inertia between the organisations due to an unwillingness to accept vulnerability there is a need to complement risk mitigation through control with social forces, such as trust (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). Warm (2011) asserted that the successful elements to collaboration involve interorganisational activity, responsibility, mutual benefit, and community value under a committed leadership to develop a culture of trust between the collaborators. In addition to an

economic, calculative viewpoint of cooperation, social scholars have proposed a complementary, social viewpoint, according to which all economic activity is embedded in and affected by a social structural context formed by individuals connected to others through interpersonal relationships (Granovetter, 1985; Krackhardt, 2003). The importance of trust for the functioning and well-being of organisations is well on its way to being fully recognised (Costa, 2003). Chen (2010), for example, evaluated the effectiveness of children and family services starting cooperation under favourable and less favourable preconditions. He found that effective, efficient, and responsive public service delivery does not only depend on the starting conditions of a partnership, and that a process of building trust can counter any negative effects of disadvantageous preconditions of the collaboration. Luhmann (1979, p. 16) predicted that scientific and technological developments that bring events under control will not substitute the need for trust as a social mechanism. Instead “one should expect trust to be increasingly in demand as a means of enduring the complexity of the future which technology will generate” (Luhmann, 1979, p. 16).

The link between trust and information exchange or information transfer has, however, not been extensively studied. There are two directions proposed on how information sharing and trust are interlinked. On the one hand, it is suggested that trust is the independent variable within this correlation, and that trust contributes to more information sharing and more open communication (e.g. Sezen & Yilmaz, 2007; Williams, 2005). O'Reilly (1978) for example found through experiments on information flow from a subordinate to a superior that low trust in the receiver of the message results in significantly more suppression of information by senders, especially information that reflects unfavourably on the sender. Strong healthy communication patterns such as high levels of connectedness would also increase the probability that meaningful information sharing will be conducted between the partners (Cheng, 2011; Mohr & Sohi, 1995). On the other hand, trust is proposed as being dependent on information sharing (e.g. Fisman & Khanna, 1999). According to Sydow, “frequent, repeated and multifaceted contacts among organisations and an open exchange of information increase the possibility of trust building in networks” (Sydow, 2000, p. 48). The more information is shared and thus available from the other organisation, the more the other party is able to assess the expectations of the counterpart and the more potential positive trust assessments can be made. However, when the information is negative this might also decrease trust. As such, the correlation is actually between information exchange and trust-alteration, because trust can potentially increase or decrease because of the interaction, depending on the experience within the interaction. It is conceivable that there is not a unidirectional causal relation in the correlation

between information exchange and trust, but that a coevolution takes place where trust enables further information sharing while information-sharing breeds trust.

Given the decisive role trust plays in cooperation, it is no surprise that the concept has been gaining attention over the past few decades (e.g. Ashleigh et al., 2003; Connell & Mannion, 2006; Dietz & Gillespie, 2011; Gursakal et al., 2009; Heavey et al., 2011). As with interorganisational cooperation, interorganisational trust is researched and developed predominantly in a business-like, private sector, economical exchange context. In the context of public institutions the focus went primarily to trust of citizens in these institutions – called institutional or public trust – which is important for the legitimacy of public institutions and the preservation of public support and cooperation with these institutions (Hough et al., 2010). In the case of the judicial system, being a specific segment of the public sector, the topic of public trust has received extraordinary attention (e.g. Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Parmentier & Vervaeke, 2011; Tyler, 2001, 2003; Tyler & Jackson, 2013). However, in his call for a broader perspective to fully understand the functioning of the public sector, Bouckaert (2012) distinguishes two other directions of trust relationships, next to the trust of citizens and organisations in government and the public sector (T<sub>1</sub>). The added perspectives are T<sub>2</sub>, trust of government and the public sector in citizens and organisations, and T<sub>3</sub>, trust within government and the public sector. In this study, this call is answered by exploring T<sub>3</sub>, trust within judicial cooperation (see Figure 1 in Chapter 1).

Unfortunately, a consensus on what trust is has not been reached throughout the theoretical literature, neither on how to conceptualise and operationalise the concept for empirical research purposes. Acknowledging that trust reflects a multitude of roles, functions, and levels of analysis, and that it is applicable to different contexts, has been a recent turning point for theory and research. Despite this acknowledgment of the differences between conceptualisations, scholars are starting to concentrate on the common elements across perspectives in order to develop coherent knowledge with regard to trust (for example, Hosmer, 1995; R. M. Kramer, 1999; Rousseau et al., 1998). Since it is not possible to give a complete overview of all definitions, conceptualisations, and theories on interorganisational trust throughout the literature, across and within different disciplines, this overview will be limited to those aspects recurring most frequently in present-day interorganisational trust research and can be considered state-of-the-art. Because trust is an abstract relational dimension, trying to define it leads to touching borders with other related abstract notions such as confidence, integrity, or reliability. The framework applied in this study might differ from frameworks used by other researchers. Nonetheless, it directs the reader towards the concepts and logical framework adhered to throughout the study. By using criteria to define trust, the meaning of

the concept trust can get a static and normative character that does not fully represent its true meaning, but those static and normative characteristics are needed to enable an evaluation of the trust experiences in the interorganisational relations in the youth protection chain. Only by providing substantive clarity to the concept, this study can be applied to real world evidence, and the results become accessible and informative to real world policy makers and planners (Markusen, 1999).

### 2.2.1 A workable definition of trust

Even though trust has been identified as necessary to maintain social interactions, there is no universal definition of trust (Costa, 2003; R. M. Kramer & Tyler, 1995; Momani & Challa, 2010; Rousseau et al., 1998; Watson, 2005). Trust appears to be an omnipresent influence in social life, but at the same time, it remains a fuzzy, elusive concept. It is a complex notion, and there is no congruence between the definitions of the different fields of study, and even within the different fields (Nooteboom, 2002). Numerous definitions have been proposed throughout various disciplines and in various contexts, and reports have been made of over 70 different existing definitions (Lyon et al., 2012). It is therefore favourable to treat trust as a highly complex phenomenon, a vague concept, lacking a fixed, precise meaning, without however being meaningless altogether. It has a meaning, but this only becomes clear through further specification of the context in which trust is used. According to Costa (2003, p. 106) “a delimitation of the domain of research is, therefore, necessary in order to understand what is meant by trust and how to define it”. McKnight & Chervany (2001, p. 27) cite Robert Kaplan on this aspect suggesting “researchers purposes may be better served if they focus on specific components of trust rather than the generalized case”.

To define trust the definition of Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer (1998, p. 395) is used, namely “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another”. It implies that the willingness to be vulnerable towards the other will be affected by positive expectations of the counterpart. Trust between individual and/or collective actors is based on the decision of one party to rely on another party under conditions of risk. The trustor permits their fate to be determined by the trustee and risks that they will experience negative outcomes, i.e. injury or loss, if the trustee proves untrustworthy (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011).

A helpful way to define trust is to distinguish it from other concepts. For example, for a long time, **distrust** has been seen as the opposite of trust. In this sense, the result of decreased trust is inevitably an increase in distrust. Lewis & Weigert (1985, p. 970) added a middle position to

this continuum of lack of opinion to this noting, “trust is based on a cognitive process which discriminates among persons and institutions that are trustworthy, distrusted, and unknown”. Over the last 20 years there have been sporadic voices defying this notion, stating that trust and distrust are actually distinct concepts (Lewicki et al., 1998; Saunders et al., 2014; Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Van De Walle & Six, 2013). The arguments are that trust and distrust have different determinants, different characteristics, and different implications, and therefore they should be measured by different items. For example, trust can be associated with feelings of hope, faith, and confidence and low trust with the absence of these feelings, while distrust is associated with fear, scepticism, and cynicism, and low distrust with a lack thereof (Lewicki et al., 1998, see Figure 2). In addition, a neurological study suggests that different brain areas are involved with trust and distrust, arguing they should be seen as distinct concepts (Dimoka, 2010). Similar to the definition of trust, distrust can then be defined as the intention to *avoid* vulnerability based upon *negative* expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another. A lack of trust could be due to the lack of information on the trustee, where the trustor remains unknowledgeable about the trustee. Distrust, however, happens when a vulnerability is not accepted based on an educated guess about the intentions and behaviours of the trustee. Without taking sides in this mainly semantic discussion, there is at least a pragmatic advantage to considering the two as distinct concepts. It is considered likely that the two attitudes towards the same object can coexist. In complex interactions actors might trust each other with respect to some aspects of the relation but distrust each other regarding other aspects (Lewicki et al., 1998). When measuring both as distinct concepts, it is possible to grasp this coexistence (Van De Walle & Six, 2013).

As a result, throughout this study, trust and distrust are considered separate constructs, because it allows for grasping more of the complexity of the fuzzy concept of trust. In addition, as was clear from the preliminary interviews (see Chapter 4), while a lack of trust was described by the respondents in an IOR, the respondents never went as far as to label this as true distrust.

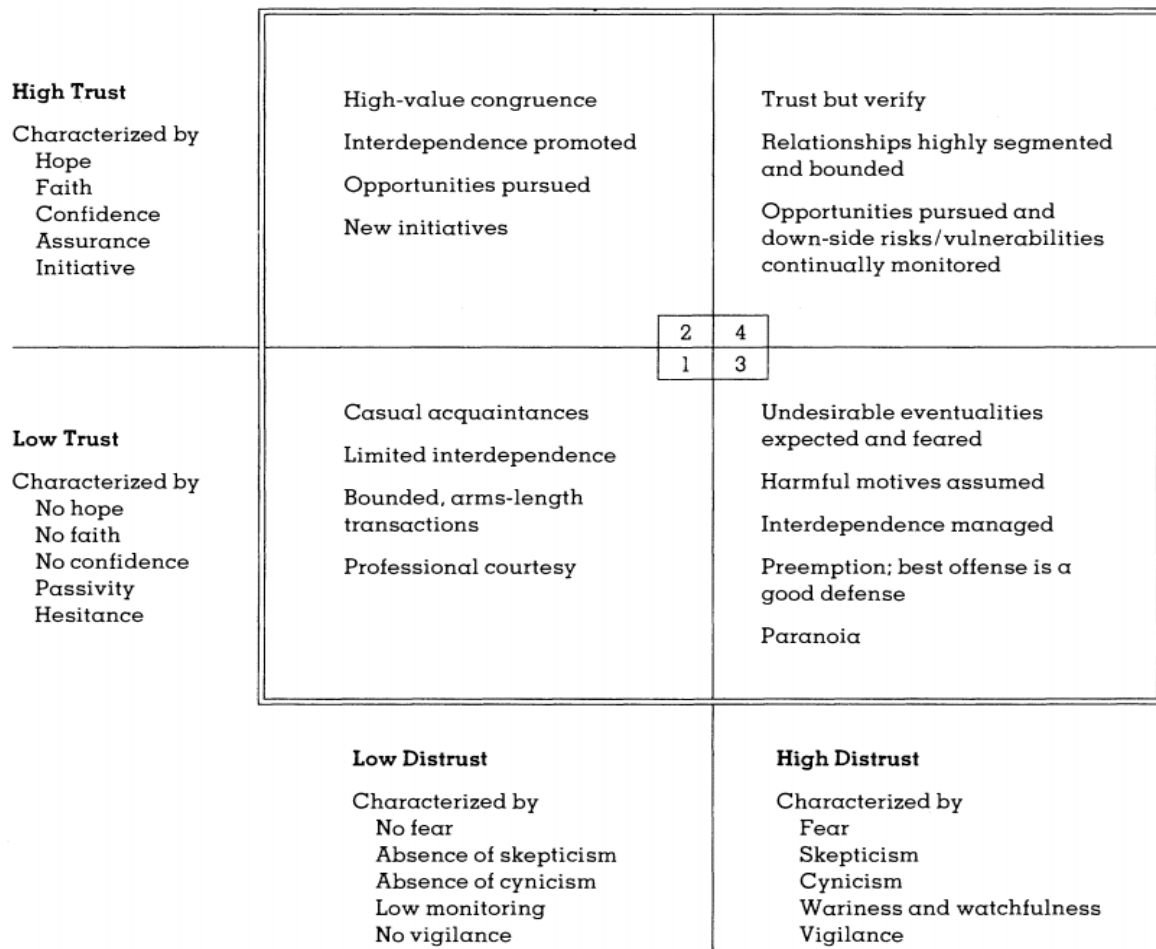


Figure 5 Trust and distrust as two separate concepts (source: Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 445)

### 2.2.2 Different components of trust

Following the definitions above, trust and distrust are considered relational attributes targeted towards a trustee. These still broad definitions should further be conceptualised to make them workable in the current research project. Many authors have tried to distinguish the different components of trust, which has led to a number of different conceptualisations. Just as trust is difficult to define, it is not a simple phenomenon to study or observe, because it encompasses several diverse constructs, such as an attitude, emotions, and risk taking behaviour (Kasper-Fuehrer & Ashkanasy, 2001). Trust should not be viewed as a static concept that can be measured in one dimension, but rather as a dynamic concept that is the result of a process and can change with every interaction. It is a **multidimensional** concept consisting of different aspects. Lewicki & Brinsfield (2011) note that each discipline still tends to focus on aspects of trust that are consistent with its own dominant theoretical paradigms, but McEvily & Tortoriello (2011) note that at least the organisational literature is increasingly converging on common definitions and theoretical conceptualisations of trust. In general, it is suggested that trust stems from both cognition and affection (McAllister, 1995), is required in contingent situations (Das & Teng,



2004; Luhmann, 1979), is characterised by a willingness to be vulnerable (Currall & Judge, 1995), is based on positive expectations about a counterpart (Mayer et al., 1995), and leads to risk-taking behaviour (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). In terms of terminology, it is useful to note that the trustor is the person who trusts, and is always an individual, while the object of trust, the trustee, can be a person or an object, such as an organisation.

As a first conceptualisation, Fulmer and Gelfand (2012) note the usefulness to distinguish between levels-of-analysis based on three different types of **targeted trustees**: the individual, the team, and the organisation. In the context of organisations, interpersonal trust refers to trust in a specific other, or using the terminology of Zaheer et al. (1998), trust placed by the individual boundary spanner (a person who forms a bridge between their own organisation and the partnering organisation) in their counterpart of the partner organisation. The team referent concerns trust in a collective of interdependent people pursuing a shared goal. The organisation referent concerns trust in the entity of an organisation. On top of this, there is the notion of system trust, where a trustor places trust in a whole environment (Luhmann, 1979). Within the organisational literature trust has been studied with regard to interpersonal work-relationships, teams, organisations, governance structures and even societies as a whole. A delimitation of the domain of research is, therefore, necessary in order to understand what is meant by trust and how to define it (Costa, 2003). In general it is not advised to strictly separate all notions, because of the problem of embeddedness, according to which the behaviour of organisations, institutions, and individuals is affected and constrained by social relations and construing them as independent would be a grievous misunderstanding (Granovetter, 1985). This argument implies that an interorganisational relationship between two organisations is not merely the sum of the interpersonal relationships between individuals employed by these organisations and understanding relationships that exist between individuals and organisations can provide valuable insight into how transactions are organised. In our case, the targeted trustee will be a member of an organisation or the organisations itself.

A second conceptual distinction applies to **trust development** before or during collaborative practices (Bryson et al., 2006). Previous experience is considered an advantage for future partnerships, while newly established relationships are characterised by low levels of interorganisational trust, which should be improved over time (Provan et al., 2007). While trust is also considered a prerequisite for network establishment (Lane & Bachmann, 1998), it is mainly trust that is developed after network formation that matters. Development of trust through interaction and communication in the developmental stages of networks is essential for successful collaborative networks (Huxham, 2003). This study looks at trust developed

during the collaborative practices and not beforehand, since the judicial youth protection is an already established form of cooperation. The study will use a retrospective account of trust evolutions during daily interactions with the counterparts. To get better insights into the developmental aspects of trust, a longitudinal study of (newly emerging) networks could be performed.

A third noteworthy subdivision is the one by Lewis & Weigert (1985) who see trust as a combination of an affective, a cognitive, and a behavioural component which are merged into a unitary social experience. The **cognitive** dimension comprises the judgement one makes about the object of trust based on the available knowledge about the trustee. Lewis & Weigert (1985) see the cognitive element in trust as an experiential and rational platform from which a leap of faith, beyond the expectations is made. However, trust is not only the result of a rational process (Luhmann, 1979). The **affective** dimension concerns the trust one is willing to give irrespective of the available knowledge. Affective foundations of trust consist of the emotional bonds between individuals. Johnson & Grayson (2005) described this component perfectly as:

*The essence of affective trust is reliance on a partner based on emotions. As emotional connections deepen, trust in a partner may venture beyond that which is justified by available knowledge. This emotion-driven element of trust makes the relationship less transparent to objective risk assessments prescribed by economists. (p. 501)*

Hence, it is not the rational knowledge regarding someone's trustworthiness that leads to trust someone; it is the irrational belief in someone's trustworthiness. The affective component and the cognitive component are together the two main sources of information that add to the complete assessment of the trustee's trustworthiness by the trustor. The relative impact of these two components can vary depending on the context (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). The **behavioural** enactment of trust is about the social action that comes forth from the aforementioned knowledge and affections. These will mostly be in line with the expectations based on knowledge and affections, however, the relationship can become disturbed due to external factors such as the personality or the discretionary power of the trustor. Trust-related behaviour implies acceptance of risk, as Mayer et al. (1995) argued. Lewis & Weigert (1985) say in this sense:

*Behaviorally, to trust is to act as if the uncertain future actions of others were indeed certain in circumstances wherein the violation of these expectations results in negative consequences for those involved. In other words, the behavioral content of trust is the undertaking of a risky course of action on the confident expectation that all persons involved in the action will act competently and dutifully. (p. 971)*

The behavioural component can be linked to the suspension of the risk in an uncertain situation, which is partly based on the perceived trustworthiness or untrustworthiness. Based on incomplete information the trustee needs to take a leap of faith before a constructive interaction can take place (Möllering, 2006).

A fourth interesting typology is dividing trust into different forms depending on the **cause of trust**. Lewicki & Bunker (1995) advocated in this respect calculus/deterrence-based trust, knowledge-based trust, and identification-based trust, where deterrence based trust would be the most fragile form of trust. Bachmann (2011) explicitly differentiates between interaction-based trust and institutional-based trust, and Sako (1992) between contract trust, competence trust, and goodwill trust. However, these typologies are subject to the critique of Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman (1995), arguing that authors fail to differentiate between factors which contribute to trust and trust itself.

A fifth and last important distinction in the conceptualisation of trust is the difference between **trust and trustworthiness**. Trustworthiness is the judgement one makes about the object of trust based on available knowledge about the trustee. This would be the result of cognitive and affective factors simultaneously playing a role. Studies on trust in organisational settings suggest that knowledge on ability, benevolence, and integrity (ABI) are the central elements of trustworthiness (Mayer et al., 1995). The objective information on the trustworthiness of a trustee is what comprises this component; it is the subjective interpretation of that information by the trustor, coloured by their affections. The objective information and the interpreted information will not be the same, since the interpretation process will be moderated by other factors such as visibility of the objective information and personal characteristics, as well as affective and intuitive factors (Bless et al., 2014). Before the information is processed and translated into an attitude the objective facts are comprehended, fitted with existing knowledge, judged, and edited. Trusting someone builds on a decision which is based on an assessment of the other party's trustworthiness in the form of their ability, integrity, and benevolence (Mayer et al., 1995; Sako, 1992), as well as a rough and quick semi-conscious assessment of the

unrecoverable costs that would occur if the other party turned out to be untrustworthy (Bachmann, 2001). The higher the costs, the more important a positive assessment of the other's trustworthiness becomes. To reach a positive assessment it does not suffice that the trustee behaves in a trustworthy manner, in accordance with what the trustor values as trustworthy; they must also be perceived as such. People interpret their world by assigning meanings to their daily activities (Blaikie, 2009). It is based on the fraction of knowledge you have about the counterpart, processed through own past experiences, and compared to the expectations one holds of trustworthy behaviour. In the literature, an effort is made to distinguish trustworthiness from trust, although the difference is not always obvious. While trust can be defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395), trustworthiness is often seen as the last part of that definition, namely the positive expectations of the intentions and behaviour of the other (Colquitt et al., 2007). While trust can be seen as the willingness to take a leap of faith in an interaction, the decision to take this leap is partly based on the perception of the other actors involved in the interaction. Only partly, because other factors can influence a willingness to be vulnerable such as a trustor's propensity to trust someone, the perceived risk within the interaction (Mayer et al., 1995), and consequences beyond the relationship (Dietz, 2011). Many times though, trust is assumed to follow automatically from a positive expectation of the other, making it harder to distinguish between the two concepts (Hardin, 2002).

### 2.2.3 Antecedents of trust(worthiness)

Trust and trustworthiness are influenced by a myriad of different factors that can either inhibit or support the formation of trust and the positive perception of trustworthiness. Trust is something that originates within relationships and occurs within a framework of interactions that is influenced by both personality and the social system, and cannot be exclusively associated with either (Luhmann, 1968). Trust is seen as a reciprocal process, complicating the distinction between causes and effects. Initial reasons to trust, mainly from sources other than the ones in the relationship soon are supplemented by other reasons such as experiences inside the relationship. In this way, an outcome of a trust relationship, such as open communication, can be a source for trust for the next relational interaction. In this study, trust relations will be examined as a consequence of all these characteristics, although it is likely also a cause of these characteristics. This mutual relationship suggests a correlation between trust and the various antecedents, though with different causalities. In addition, the specific factors influencing trust will differ depending on the context of the interorganisational alliance. The mechanisms of trust

encouragement are different, for example, in temporary networks compared to permanent networks (Meyerson et al., 1996), and in virtual networks compared to networks with personal contact between the individuals (Panteli & Sockalingam, 2005).

Although initial attention has gone to determining the antecedents of trust, with less attention to what determines the perception of trustworthiness (Hardin, 2002), scientific research is now also seeing the importance of the latter (e.g. Dietz, 2011; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). Although these are sometimes proposed as antecedents of trust, the argumentation of Hardin (2002) is followed that they usually have a direct effect on perceived trustworthiness instead. Many of the earlier proposed antecedents of trust likely influence trust only indirectly through their influence on perceived trustworthiness. It is important to understand what factors allow an individual to perform competent work, to act benevolently, and to display honourable behaviour that is also perceived as such by the counterpart.

The sources can be divided according to the level on which they reside. As a result, an analysis of the sources of trust calls for a multilevel analysis. Nonetheless, trust is believed to be the product of an infinite number of factors that will interact with each other in different ways. Therefore, a non-exhaustive list of factors will be described here, keeping in mind that in the exploration of the specific judicial context, again other factors might be influential. A more extensive account of possible sources can be found in Fulmer & Gelfand (2012). Our interests lie in how the setting in which these individuals with varying personal characteristics are stimulated or inhibited to behave trustworthy and to be perceived as trustworthy.

#### 2.2.3.1 *Trustor characteristics*

The first interorganisational trust sources are the characteristics of the trustor. This can be the general propensity to trust others, and the willingness to form new relationships and to give others a second chance (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Rotter, 1980). The trusting and distrusting predispositions of individuals (R. M. Kramer, 1999) is also referred to as general trust. Barber (1983, p. 9) describes general trust as the “expectation of the persistence and fulfilment of the natural and the moral orders”. Not everyone will have an equally high propensity to trust, since while trusting increases the chances to gather gains from cooperation and reduces the social complexity (Luhmann, 1979), but it also makes one vulnerable to inflicted damage by the trusted party. Similar to the hawk-dove game in game theory, the best performing strategy will depend on the intentions of the counterpart (Smith & Price, 1973). A second individual trustor characteristic that plays a role is the identification they feel with the counter-organisation, which will depend on the personal norms and values the trustor has (Deery et al., 2006).

#### 2.2.3.2 *Trustee characteristics and behaviour*

The personal abilities of the trustee, based on cognitive and technical capacities and prior education and experience, and individual variations in benevolence and integrity will play an important role in how they are perceived (Colquitt et al., 2007). When the trustee is an organisation, the abilities, benevolence, and integrity of the organisation will become important (Caldwell & Clapham, 2003). Which abilities are needed, what behaviour will be considered as benevolent, and what indicates integrity will depend on the requirements of the context.

#### 2.2.3.3 *Relational sources*

The attitude towards the 'trusted object' develops in a specific dyadic interaction between a trustor and a trustee. In a personal relationship, two main sources of trust are frequently connected to trust formation: the calculative process and the relational interconnection. Concerning the calculative process, a cost-benefit analysis is performed. In this process, two things are considered: the trustor's utility function and credible information. The utility function refers to in how far it is perceived that the actor has an interest in continuing a certain relationship (Hardin, 2001). Credible information can be found in third parties, the trustee's reputation, institutional sources (e.g. performance reports and indicators) or in the trustees themselves. Relational sources are based on repeated interactions between actors that could lead to the formation of emotional attachments and on reciprocated interpersonal care and concern (Rousseau et al., 1998). These sources are slowly established, strengthened, and expanded because of repeated experiences with interaction in risky and uncertain environments.

#### 2.2.3.4 *Organisational sources*

This section deals with the characteristics of the trustee organisation influencing the willingness to trust a trustee from that organisation. A cooperative organisational context but also a competitive organisational context can increase trust in co-workers (Hill et al., 2009). The presence of reward structures has been found to foster interpersonal trust when the partner is perceived to share common goals (Ferrin & Dirks, 2003). Organisational characteristics such as ongoing organisational changes (Kiefer, 2005), the extent to and the length in which an organisation uses temporary workers (George, 2003), and perceived politics in organisations have been negatively related to trust in organisations (Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012). Perceived organisational support, on the other hand, has been positively related to individual trust in organisations (Whitener, 2001).

#### 2.2.3.5 *Network sources*

On the interorganisational level, formal and informal institutions present in the interorganisational cooperation were identified as sources of trustworthiness. Formal institutions are the rules and roles present in the organisations, and informal institutions are the organisational routines and the normative framework of the cooperation (Oomsels & Bouckaert, 2014). The presence of binding contracts between organisations, or the network density and heterogeneity also play a role (Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012).

#### 2.2.3.6 *Contextual sources external to the interorganisational network*

Factors external to organisations also can exert an impact on interpersonal trust. Both the society in which a person lives as the organisations in which they work or with whom they interact, provide social institutions. An institution is any structure or mechanism of social order governing the behaviour of a set of individuals within a given community. At the national level, governments that provide structures to facilitate business transactions, including laws and regulations, increase interpersonal trust in business settings (Child & Mollering, 2003). Research on national political systems also showed that political systems affect employees' interpersonal trust, mediated by differences in organisations' HRM policies and practices (Pearce et al., 2000).

From this perspective, part of the trusting attitude will be dependent on institutions that have surrounded the trustor, and which have institutionalised them with understandings about 'how things are done' (Zucker, 1986). These understandings are then shared by the community, which then renders these understandings to real outcomes, through the application of the Thomas theorem: *"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences"* (Thomas & Thomas, 1928). In other words, the interpretation of a situation causes the action, and this interpretation is not objective.

#### 2.2.4 *A comprehensive framework: The universal trust process*

There is some overlap between the conceptualisations described above. For example, the components of Lewis & Weigert's framework (1985) can be found in the other frameworks. The cognitive component involves knowledge on trustee's abilities, resembling knowledge-based trust of Lewicki & Bunker (1995) and the calculative antecedents. The affective component can in turn be linked to the estimation of the benevolence of the trustee and to the identification-based trust of Lewicki & Bunker (1995) and the affective relational antecedents. The behavioural component shows resemblance to the risk-taking acts described by other authors.

Given all the complexities of trust an attempt to combine all of its intricacies into one universal model has been performed by Dietz (2011), applicable to all interactions involving vulnerability.

Be it with an organisation, a team, or an individual; in the beginning of a relationship or far into the relationship; and in any given context. Figure 6 illustrates the multi-dimensional, integrated framework for looking at the process of trust. It uses an open systems model where trust is viewed as a process, and puts all elements in a logical sequence, from the antecedents (inputs), to trustworthiness and trust (process), to risk taking behaviour (output). Dietz based his model on the existing literature and turned all different aspect into a comprehensive view. Nonetheless, with this framework he also goes against the notion that there are different types of trust depending on the cause of the trust, and concretely as a response to the article of Bachmann (2011) in the same issue of the *Journal on trust research*. Dietz defies Bachman's notion that different types of trust have distinctive origins and dynamics. As he understands it, these various types of trust as merely variations in the first stage of the trust process, namely the inputs. Most decisions to trust are informed by evidence from both interactions and institutions, including reputation effects such as third party testimonies (Ferrin et al., 2006), and assumptions based on role (Meyerson et al., 1996). As such, trust is never just based on deterrence, or on knowledge alone.

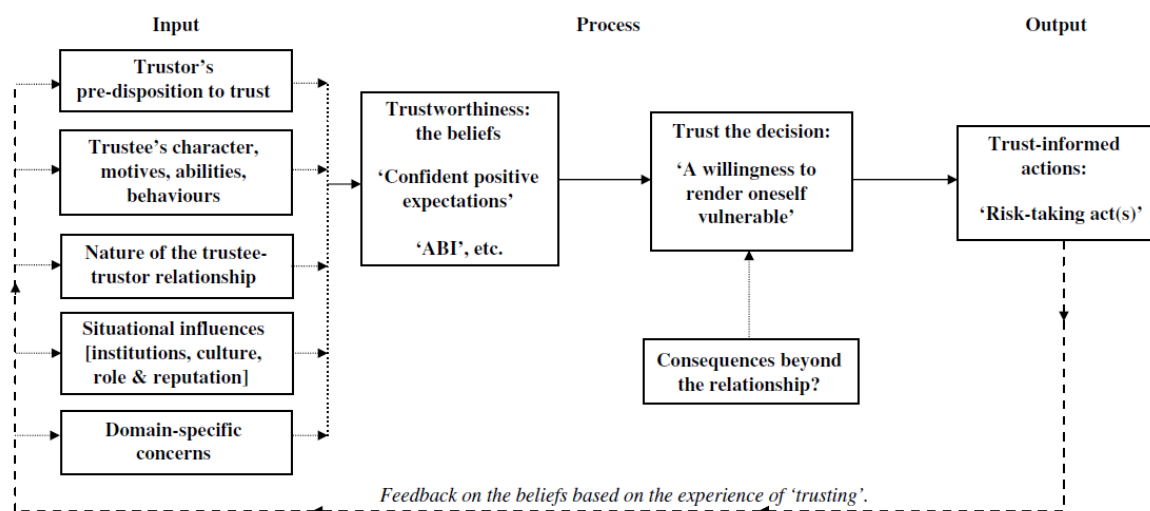


Figure 6 The universal trust process as depicted by Dietz (2011, p. 219)

The first stage of the universal trust process comprises the different antecedents that play a role in shaping the perception of trustworthiness, all subdivided in separate categories. The trustor's predisposition to trust, the trustee's character, motives, abilities, and behaviours, the nature of the trustee-trustor relationship (the relational antecedents), the situational influences (both organisational, interorganisational, and external), and the domain specific concerns, meaning the concerns specific to the domain of the interaction (e.g. a car sale vs. a medical surgery).



The second stage involves the beliefs the trustor holds about the trustworthiness of the trustee. Many factors have been linked to trustworthiness, such as predictability (Rotter, 1967), or openness and fairness (Butler, 1991), but it is mostly limited to three components, namely ability, benevolence, and integrity (ABI in short). Mayer et al. (1995, pp. 717–719) define ability as “that group of skills, competencies, and characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain”; benevolence as “the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive” and integrity as “the trustor’s perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable”. Trustworthiness should be understood as a continuum, rather than the trustee being either trustworthy or untrustworthy (Mayer et al., 1995). Each of the three factors can vary along a continuum and as such make for a more or less trustworthy individual. All three dimensions are assumed to be relevant in the perception of trustworthiness, while the comparative weights are likely to vary with respect to the context of trust (Nooteboom, 2002).

From the perception follows a willingness to render oneself vulnerable, the actual decision to trust the other party. At this stage, the belief in the others’ trustworthiness is manifested in trust itself, and a trustor considers a trustee trustworthy, and further intends to allow themselves to be subject to the risk of potentially detrimental actions on the part of the trustee, on the basis that such outcomes are unlikely. However, this decision implies only an intention to act. For the trustor to demonstrate unequivocally their trust in the trustee, they must follow through on this decision by engaging in any of the trust-informed risk-taking behaviours. These acts provide new information for the next trust process that will take place between a trustor and a trustee, going back to the input stage of the process. Consequences beyond the relationship can distort the willingness to be vulnerable, where actor A might be willing to trust counterpart B, but there may nevertheless be consequences for A beyond their relationship with B that may forestall the decision, such as the impact on a third party C’s assessment of A, should A decide to trust B (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006).

While the universal trust process offers good concepts to frame each trust experience into, specific interactions will have a particular implementation. Certain inputs will be more available at the time of the interaction, and the importance of the ability, benevolence, or integrity dimension can differ depending on the domain of the interaction. Therefore, the framework offers a good lens to look at any interaction, but the specificities of that interaction will still need to be determined to fully understand the trust process taking place in that context. A gap that remains in the literature is how certain inputs influence the perception, and how the perception influences trust.

### 2.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the theoretical background was provided, needed to approach the subject of interorganisational trust in a judicial setting in a knowledgeable manner. The description of the background deliberately remained general, in the sense that the main concepts were introduced and the delineation of the conceptualisations adhered to in the exploratory study were provided. Since the goal of the study is not the narrow testing of preconceived theoretical hypothesis in a new setting, but rather the broad description of the trust process in this context and the gathering of new insights on trust in this organisational setting, there is no point in going into detail about specific findings in other contexts. This will be done only at the end of the research to link the findings in this context to possible earlier findings in other contexts. Moreover, it was important for the researcher to keep an open mind about the possible findings in this context, without too many predisposed assumptions.

Regarding the main concepts, the exhibition of the theoretical framework started broadly by introducing the concept of interorganisational cooperation in a networked setting, where organisations try to cooperate in a non-hierarchical, horizontally organised manner. Judicial cooperation is seen as such networked cooperation, with the specific characteristics of being a non-voluntary network, with certain conflicting values and approaches, and with a prospect of indefinite cooperation. Information exchange was considered the main interdependency between these organisations, and the vulnerabilities and risks that stem from this interaction were described.

Interorganisational trust was then introduced, given all its intricacies, and the complexity of the concept was displayed. From the myriad of existing definitions and conceptualisations, the definition of Rousseau et al. (1998) and conceptual framework of the universal trust model of Dietz (2011) were taken as starting points for the exploration. Rousseau et al. define trust as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (1998, p. 395). Dietz (2011) sees trust as a dynamic process going through a universal set of steps for each interaction where a vulnerability is involved. Before the vulnerability is accepted, a trustor assesses the trustworthiness of the trustee, namely the ability, benevolence, integrity of the trustee, based on different input factors as pieces of information at the disposal of the trustor. Risk taking behaviour will result from a willingness to be vulnerable based on the positive assessment of the trustworthiness, also taking into account possible consequences beyond the trustor-trustee relationship. The experience from taking this risk can serve as a new piece of information for the assessment of the trustworthiness, making the process cyclical.

In the next chapter, the judicial youth care chain, the case in which the universal trust process will be explored, is first introduced, before the actual exploration of the trust process is reported on.



## Chapter 3 Introduction to the case: Judicial youth care in Flanders

The case that will be studied for the exploration of the trust process in a judicial context is the Flemish judicial youth care chain. More details on the selection of this case and the six organisations are provided in the next chapter on the results of a first preliminary study within the field. To get a good understanding of the organisations that belong to the Flemish judicial youth care and the interdependencies between the organisations, a detailed description will be given of the organisations that belong to the demarcated case: the juvenile police, the mandated facilities OCJ and VK, the juvenile public prosecutor's office (OM), the juvenile court, and the SDJ<sup>2</sup>. This description will be based primarily on the legislative documents governing the individual organisations as well as the links between the organisations in the chain. The most important documents that were examined are the Flemish decree on integrated youth care of 2013, and the implementation act of the Flemish government of 2014, accompanying the decree. These legal documents provide the most recent and most detailed depiction of the interorganisational relations within the judicial youth care chain. Several other legal documents provide additional references to the relations between the organisations. The rules and regulations coordinating these interactions can have their influence on the emergence and evolution of the trust process, which is why it is deemed important to include these documents as a source of information. However, a legal document does not provide a complete picture of the ins and outs of these relationships, since they are a bare representation leaving out all aspects of the human dimension of social interactions, such as trust. While the document analysis as such will not provide an answer to the research questions on the manifestations of the trust process throughout daily interactions between the actors in the judicial youth care chain, it serves multiple purposes in this phase of the research. First, a thorough orientation within the field of judicial youth care aids the exploration of the case at hand and offers a better understanding of a complex and relatively closed and obscure research setting. Second, it offers an insight in the correct wording of all positions held within the organisations and the correct

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<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations will be used throughout this dissertation:

OCJ = Youth care support centre (Dutch: Ondersteuningscentrum jeugdzorg)

VK = Confidential centre on child abuse and neglect (Dutch: Vertrouwenscentrum kindermishandeling)

OM = Juvenile public prosecutor's office (Dutch: Openbaar ministerie jeugdzaken/jeugdparket)

SDJ = Social service for judicial youth care (Dutch: Sociale dienst gerechtelijke jeugdhulp).

terminologies in the processes of the organisations, important for the preparation of the interview scheme. Respondents appreciate a good knowledge of their working environment and this prior knowledge allowed the interviewer not to waste time in asking the respondents about their work processes. The analysis of the legal framework helped in preparing for the data collection, where it is important to show the respondent that the interviewer already knows something, but not everything, and is worth teaching (Weiss, 1995).

The focus of the legal examination will go to the specifications of the interactions regarding information exchange and to the input provided by the actors in finding the best measure given the individual situation of the minor. First, a brief history of the Flemish youth protection is given, to understand better the background of how the organisations came to work together. Then, the current structure of each organisation included in the case is described in detail, including how each organisation is connected to the other organisations in the chain. A final summary gives an overview of the distinguished interactions regarding information exchange between the organisations.

### 3.1 A brief history of the judicial youth care in Flanders

Nowadays the child protection system in Flanders covers a wide variety of measures provided by an extensive network of organisations. However, children were not always protected by the government against neglect or maltreatment from their parents or their environment. For long, the choices regarding childrearing were seen as the sole responsibility of the parents and meddling from the government was seen as unnecessary. The church and charity institutions could provide help where needed. Moreover, children were generally treated equal to adults. Eventually, the vulnerability of children was being recognised, and in 1912, a law on child protection<sup>3</sup> was established. This law focused only on minors that committed an offence, meaning that childcare could only be initiated after criminal behaviour. Since 1965, all minors<sup>4</sup> in Belgium are protected by the state from growing up in an unsafe environment, with the introduction of the notion of a '**child in danger**' in the youth protection act of April 8, 1965<sup>5</sup>. A child was considered in danger when the parents could no longer provide a healthy, safe, and protected environment for the child<sup>6</sup>. The federal government initially had the responsibility over this matter, but this authority was transferred to the Flemish community with two state

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<sup>3</sup> Law of May 15, 1912 regarding child protection (Belgian State Journal: May 27, 1912)

<sup>4</sup> In Belgium, an individual is considered a minor when they have not reached the age of 18 years (Article 388 Civil Code).

<sup>5</sup> Law of April 8, 1965 regarding youth protection, taking charge of minors who have committed an act defined as an offence, and the restoration of damage caused by this offence (Belgian State Journal: April 15, 1965) (This act was last amended in 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Article 2 Youth protection act.

reforms in 1980 and 1988. Two decrees regarding special youth support – one in 1985<sup>7</sup> and one in 1990<sup>8</sup>, coordinated by another decree in 1990<sup>9</sup> – became concerned with children growing up in a ‘**problematic upbringing situation**’, replacing the term child in danger. These decrees installed a stricter separation between extra-judicial and judicial youth support, where judicial support was explicitly viewed as subsidiary to the extra-judicial approach (Put, 2015), a principle that has been upheld in all subsequent regulations. This principle states that judicial support can only be called into action either when extra-judicial support cannot resolve the problems or when there is a case of high urgency. The philosophy behind this approach is to first support the child and their environment to solve the problems from their own abilities, and only when all else fails, binding measures should be dictated from above, as an ultimum remedium. In 2008 the two coordinated decrees were replaced by a new decree on special youth support<sup>10</sup> which mainly further coordinated the existing regulation, but also added articles on the privacy of the users, the access to the case files, and the lowering of certain age restrictions from fourteen to twelve (Put, 2015).

In the meantime, special youth support was integrated within the broader youth care in the form of ‘integrated youth care’, an intersectoral policy program of the Flemish government (Verhoest et al., 2014). This program aims to achieve a coordinated approach to offer minors, their parents, and others from their environment the necessary care and aid when there is a need for it. Integrated youth care coordinates several sectors, where besides special youth care, also the aspects of youth care concerning family care, care for individuals with a handicap, general welfare, mental healthcare, and centres for student counselling are involved. A first decree on integrated youth care appeared in 2004<sup>11</sup> accompanied by a decree on the legal position of minors in integrated youth care<sup>12</sup>.

Since March 1, 2014, a new decree on integrated youth care (further IYC)<sup>13</sup> determines the landscape of the Flemish youth care. It is complemented with a Flemish implementation order<sup>14</sup> (further order IYC) which further stipulates the articles of the new decree. Within this most

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<sup>7</sup> Flemish decree of June 27, 1985 regarding special youth support (Belgian State Journal: July 5, 1986).

<sup>8</sup> Flemish decree of March 28, 1990 to amend the decree of June 27, 1985 on special youth support (Belgian State Journal: April 7, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Decision of the Flemish government of April 4, 1990 for the coordination of the decrees on special youth support (Belgian State Journal: May 8, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> Flemish decree of March 7, 2008 regarding special youth support (Belgian State Journal: April 15, 2008).

<sup>11</sup> Flemish decree of May 7, 2004 regarding integrated youth care (Belgian State Journal: October 11, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> Flemish decree of May 7, 2004 regarding the position of the minor in integrated youth care (Belgian State Journal: October 4, 2004).

<sup>13</sup> New Flemish decree of July 12, 2013 regarding integrated youth care (Belgian State Journal: September 13, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Decision of the Flemish Government of October 21, 2014 regarding integrated youth care (Belgian State Journal: February 28, 2014).

recent integrated youth care framework, the special youth care deals with minors who find themselves in an **‘alarming situation’**, which replaces the notion of a problematic upbringing situation. An alarming situation is defined by the IYC as “a situation threatening the normal development of the minor because his psychological, physical, or sexual integrity or that of one or more members of their family is violated, or because his affective, moral, or social developmental opportunities are threatened, which could pose a societal need to offer youth care.” (own translation).<sup>15</sup> This can cover a wide variety of situations, for example, a 12 year old who declares to a teacher that they have been sexually abused at home, or a 17 year old who keeps running away from home and ignores parental authority. The case in this study – the Flemish judicial youth care chain – deals with the judicial side of special youth care. Judicial youth care does not refer to minors who have committed a crime. This is dealt with by the **juvenile justice system**, together forming the youth protection system (see Figure 7). In the event of an offending minor, the measures are referred to as measures of protection instead of measures of care<sup>16</sup>. The legal regulation for juvenile justice is still directed on the federal level by the federal youth protection act of 1965 (but is being transferred to the communal level), while judicial youth care is directed on the level of the Flemish community. In 2015 a little more than half of the cases entering the judicial system concerned alarming situations (56,96%), and less than half concerned acts categorised as offences (43,04%)<sup>17</sup> (College of Prosecutors General, 2015). The judicial youth care is thus on the one hand a segment of the integrated youth care and on the other a segment of the judicial youth protection system.

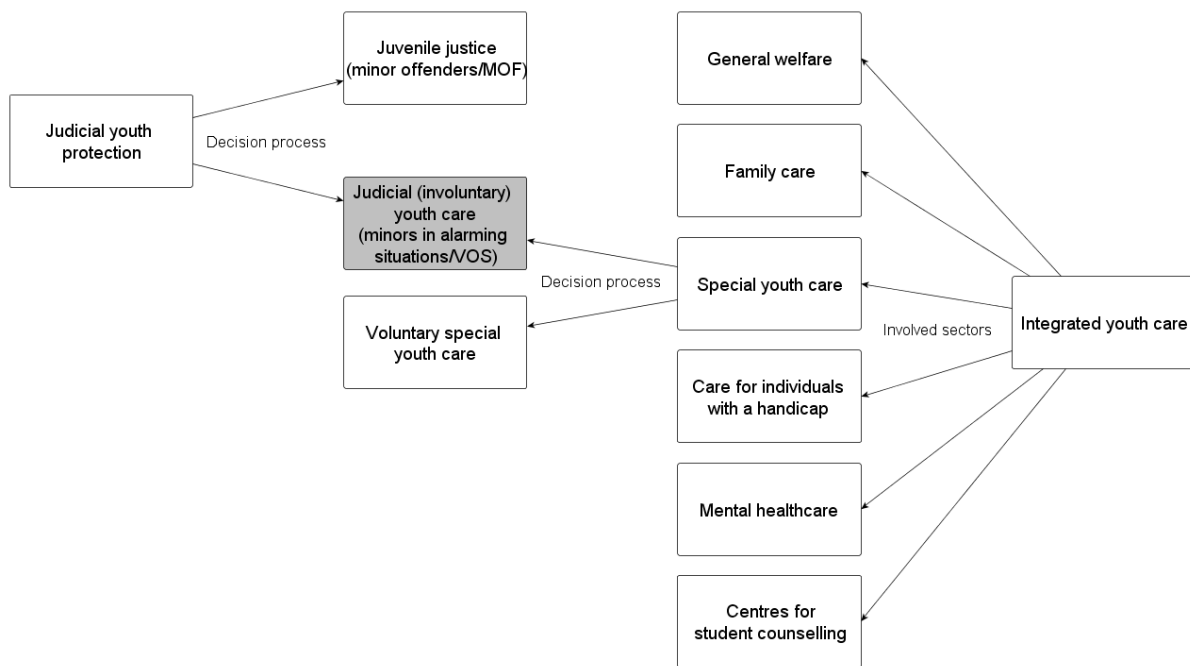
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<sup>15</sup> Article 2, § 1, 54° IYC: “verontrustende situatie: een situatie die de ontwikkeling van een minderjarige bedreigt doordat zijn psychische, fysieke of seksuele integriteit of die van een of meer leden van zijn gezin wordt aangetast of doordat zijn affectieve, morele, intellectuele of sociale ontplooiingskansen in het gedrang komen, waardoor het aanbieden van jeugdhulpverlening maatschappelijk noodzakelijk kan zijn”

<sup>16</sup> Minors are under Belgian law not deemed responsible for these actions, therefore the measures are not described as sanctions (aside from some exceptions such as traffic offences starting from the age of 16).

<sup>17</sup> In Dutch: ‘als misdrijf omschreven feit’ (MOF) and ‘verontrustende opvoedingssituatie’ (VOS).





*Figure 7 Context of the judicial youth care in Flanders*

### 3.2 A demarcation of the Flemish judicial youth care chain

Special youth care for children in alarming situations can be separated into two parts: voluntary youth care and involuntary or judicial youth care. Involuntary or judicial youth care concerns aid to a minor and its surroundings that is enforced by a juvenile judge. The motive to impose certain measurements is that the child finds itself in an alarming situation and there is no willingness from the minor or its close environment to accept the needed care, or the situation is too urgent to check for cooperation. To safeguard the subsidiary principle of judicial youth care there are many steps involved before the case of a minor in an alarming situation enters the judicial system. The case will need to pass several independent organisations offering their independent opinion on whether or not judicial care is indeed appropriate, and if so, which type of care is best suited. Once a measure is installed, careful follow-up of the situation will happen in order for the imposed care to remain relevant and adapted when necessary.

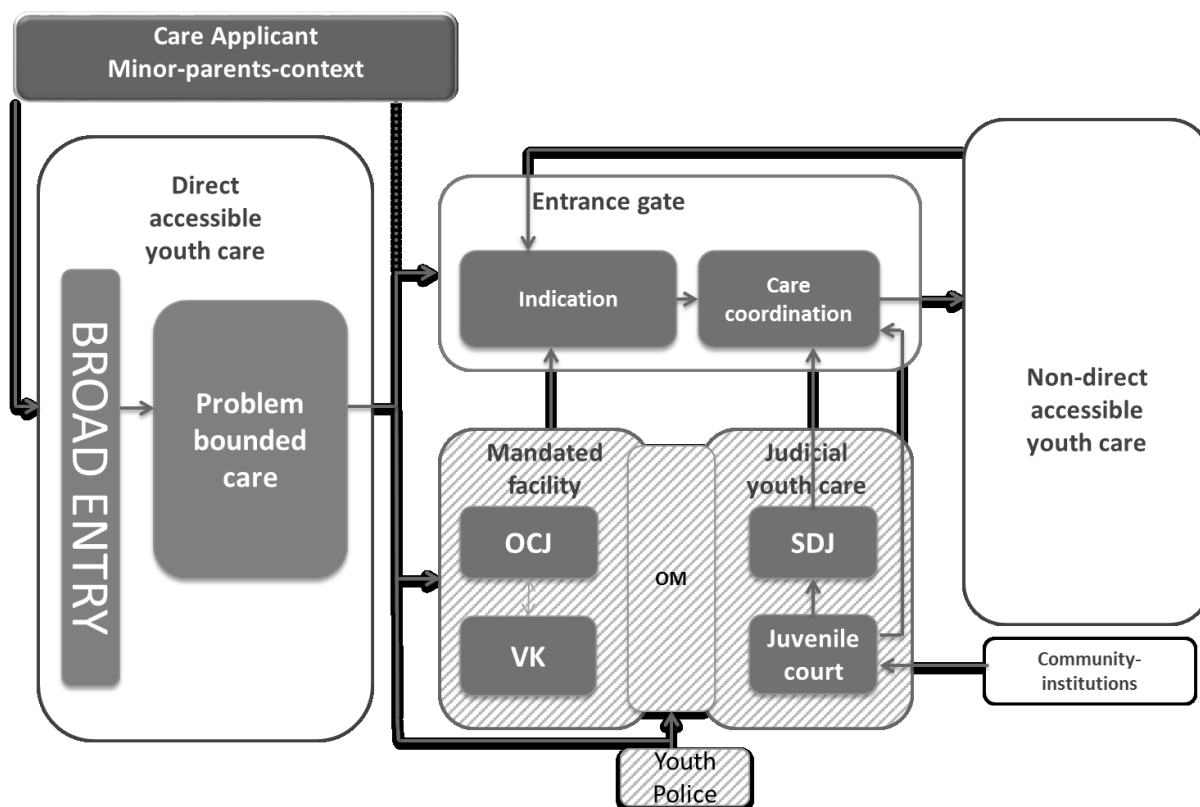


Figure 8 The integrated youth care, highlighting the demarcation of the organisations included in this study (adapted from: [wvg.vlaanderen.be/jongerenwelzijn/jeugdhulp/jeugdhulplandschap/](http://wvg.vlaanderen.be/jongerenwelzijn/jeugdhulp/jeugdhulplandschap/))

In this study, the scope of the investigation is limited to the six organisations that are directly involved in the information gathering and/or decision-making on judicial youth care for minors in an alarming situation. The included organisations are the youth police, the mandated facilities OCJ and VK, the juvenile public prosecutor's office (OM), the juvenile court, and the SDJ (see Figure 8). Judicial youth care entails a complex decision-making process on high risk-cases involving many separate actors, each belonging to different policy domains, having separate tasks, functioning with a personal culture and philosophy, and with little authority over one another. The cooperation between the six organisations in the judicial youth care chain covers three policy domains and one non-profit organisation (youth police: federal Ministry of Internal Affairs; OCJ and SDJ: Flemish Ministry of Welfare, Health, and Family; OM and juvenile court: federal Ministry of Justice; VK: non-profit). There is also a line to be drawn between those actors focussing more on care provision (VK, SDJ, OCJ) and organisations focussing more on safety and protection (police, OM, court).

### 3.2.1 Local juvenile police forces

Youth cases are handled by the police on the local municipality level. Of the 188 local police districts in Belgium, 113 are situated in Flanders. Each district is governed locally by the mayor(s)

of the municipalities that belong to the police district. It is not mandatory for a police district to have a separate team for youth and family matters, and their presence depends greatly on the available capacity of the districts, which usually correlates positively with the size of the districts. In smaller districts, it is usual to have one officer appointed for youth and family cases, rather than a team, and this one officer can have other tasks on top of youth care. Often youth and family teams are occupied by social assistants responsible for investigating the social context of the child. In a significant number of cases, the police are one of the first actors coming across an alarming situation, and play an important role at the start of a possible judicial process. However, a number of cases will also enter a judicial care trajectory without the police ever being involved. Despite their importance, specific policies for police when encountering an alarming situation of a minor are not given by the IYC nor by other regulations, unless internal guidelines are set on the local level of a particular police force (De Schrijver & De Kimpe, 2009).

Alarming situations can get to the attention of the police through four instances. First, a potential alarming situation can be picked up during routine police work, such as visiting a household for noise disturbances. Second, a neighbour, a family-member, a friend or other individual from the child's environment, or the school can report possible dysfunctions within a family. Third, the police can be instructed to investigate further alarming situations by the public prosecutor for cases that were referred to them by the mandated facilities (see *infra*). The fourth possibility is that deviant behaviour of a minor (e.g. crime or truancy) or of their entourage reveals deeper-rooted dysfunctionalities within a family.

Once an alarming situation is suspected, the police will continue investigations by means of unannounced visits to confirm or reject these suspicions. During these home visits, they pay attention to hygiene, the financial situation, the child-parent relation, occupation, hobbies of the parents, and so on. Moreover, they can also contact schools and care agencies where the family is known, to get a broad picture of the situation. When the situation turns out not to be as alarming as expected the police can offer the family some guidance towards voluntary youth care. When on the other hand a situation does seem alarming, a police officer will make an official report to the OM with a statement about what was observed. These police statements are official written documents of legally mandated police officials that contain a chronological precise and objective statement of the observations and investigations (Bockstaele, 2005). In court, these statements will be used as evidence for the deciding judge and the proceedings of a case will partly be determined by the precision, completeness, and reliability of these police statements (Van Nooten, 2003).

### 3.2.2 Mandated facilities (OCJ & VK)

The mandated facilities – youth care support centre (OCJ) and confidential centre on child abuse and neglect (VK) – are newly created by the IYC in 2014<sup>18</sup>. The OCJ is a completely new founded organisation, while the VK existed prior to the reforms and gained a new functionality next to their regular functioning as direct-accessible primary care provider through the IYC. There are 20 OCJ's in Flanders, one per administrative district (apart from a few mergers)<sup>19</sup>. An OCJ is staffed by a team leader and counsellors, where the latter should hold a degree that confirms their pedagogical and social knowledge. Counsellors at the OCJ cannot be at the same time counsellors at the SDJ. There are six VK's in Flanders, one per province. They are a non-profit organisation, subsidised by the Flemish government for which guidelines have been published<sup>20</sup>. The main task of a mandated facility is to assess the situation of a minor and refer them and their family to the care path best appropriate to the situation. The tasks of the VK are restricted to cases of child abuse, defined by the IYC as “any form of physical, mental, or sexual violence of which a child is the victim, either actively by deeds of violence or passively by severe neglect of the parents or any person the child has a relation of dependency with.” (own translation).<sup>21</sup>

The most common way for a family to come to the attention of a mandated facility is through primary youth care providers, who pick up a problem at the direct accessible care services where they work. These are services where a person can contact directly with a problem, for example a pupil guidance centre or a general practitioner. When these primary caregivers estimate that the direct accessible care does not suffice to help the child, they can bring the case to an intersectoral entrance gate: an independent coordinating entity that evaluates and indicates what non-directly accessible (non-judicial) youth care should be provided. When, however, individual (direct or non-direct accessible) care providers assess they can no longer protect the development or integrity of the child, they must refer the case to a mandated facility<sup>22</sup>. This can be done by sending a motivated document (M-doc) through an online system with the identification of the child and their parents, and the reason why the caregiver refers the case to the mandated facility and why they suspect a societal need for care<sup>23</sup>. The document can be

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<sup>18</sup> Article 32 to 43 IYC; article 54 to 72 Order IYC.

<sup>19</sup> Article 54 Order IYC.

<sup>20</sup> Decision of the Flemish Government of May 17, 2002 on the recognition and subsidising of the confidential centres on child abuse and neglect (Belgian State Journal: June 19, 2002).

<sup>21</sup> Article 2, § 1, 32° IYC: “kindermishandeling: elke vorm van lichamelijk, psychisch of seksueel geweld waar van een minderjarige het slachtoffer is, actief door het schadelijke optreden of passief door een ernstige nalatigheid van zijn ouders of van iedere andere persoon ten opzichte van wie de minderjarige in een relatie van afhankelijkheid staat”.

<sup>22</sup> Article 32 IYC.

<sup>23</sup> Article 62 & 63 Order IYC.

directed to either the OCJ or the VK, and the care provider should take the specific problem of the child into account when choosing the facility, depending on the specific expertise of each type of facility<sup>24</sup>. Especially when child abuse is an issue, they should opt for the VK. A referral can also be made by the public prosecutor, after reports on an alarming situation are received from the police (see *infra*). The OM does not use the same electronic motivated document as the care-providers, but they do follow a similar template. When one of the mandated facilities was in the past involved in the youth care of a minor and the minor is now registered with the other mandated facility, or when the youth care of another minor from the environment of the child is already registered with the other mandated facility, the OCJ and VK are obliged to negotiate the case with each other<sup>25</sup>. This negotiation is in the interest of the minor, and it is possible that during this negotiation, the mandated facilities decide to transfer a case from one to the other. If this happens, they should notify the referring party of this transfer.

After receiving a referral from the care providers or the OM, the mandated facilities will investigate the alarming situation by mapping the situation of the minor, their parents, their guardians (when applicable) and the persons from their living environment, and by collecting the necessary information to adequately assess the societal need for care, including information on the current care provided<sup>26</sup>. A societal need is present when after this investigation the mandated facility qualifies that care is deemed necessary<sup>27</sup>, irrespective of the judgement of the child and the parent. During the investigation, the mandated facilities must maximally include the minor and their environment and should organise at least one meeting with the referring caregiver. The investigation can take a maximum of 65 workdays. The mandated facilities should guarantee to the magistrates responsible for youth cases that youth care is installed in an alarming situation<sup>28</sup>.

The investigation should result in a motivated decision on whether or not there is a societal need for youth care<sup>29</sup> and if so, an assessment whether there is cooperation from the child and their environment to accept this care. There are five possible scenarios after such investigation:

1. The mandated facility concludes that there is **no societal need** for care offered by the government because there is no concern about the child's safety and/or

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<sup>24</sup> Article 70 Order IYC.

<sup>25</sup> Article 71 Order IYC.

<sup>26</sup> Article 65 Order IYC.

<sup>27</sup> Article 2, § 1, 34° IYC: "maatschappelijke noodzaak: de kwalificatie die na het onderzoek, vermeld in artikel 34, door de gemandateerde voorziening aan een verontrustende situatie wordt gegeven en die de noodzaak vastlegt om jeugdhulpverlening in te schakelen".

<sup>28</sup> Article 33 § 1, 3° IYC.

<sup>29</sup> Article 34 IYC.

development. In this case, the responsibility to deal with remaining problems is returned to the family.

2. There is a **societal need** for care but the **current care** provided offers **sufficient** guarantees for further development of the minor and the clients **cooperate and accept** this care. The current care is continued and the mandated facility monitors the situation<sup>30</sup>. The adequacy of the care and the societal need are re-evaluated at least every six months, in consultation with the minor and their environment<sup>31</sup>.
3. There is a **societal need** for care and the **current care** provided **does not suffice** for the assessed situation. The mandated facility will organise voluntary direct or non-direct accessible care and the clients voluntarily **cooperate and accept** the care. Here also, the adequacy of the care and the societal necessity are re-evaluated at least every six months, in consultation with the minor and their environment<sup>32</sup>.
4. There is a **societal need** for youth care and the minor or their parents or guardians **do not cooperate with or accept** the proposed care. In this case, the mandated facility is obliged to **refer** the case to the OM<sup>33</sup>.
5. The minor or their parents or guardians **do not cooperate** with the investigation into the societal need. The mandated facility can therefore not assess the societal need for care. Also in this instance, the case should be **referred** to the OM<sup>34</sup>.

Sending the case to the public prosecutor in the two latter cases can only be done after inviting the involved individuals to a contestable debate. The objective of the referral to the OM is to get the case to a juvenile judge who then has the authority to impose the necessary care onto the family. This referral to the OM contains at least<sup>35</sup>:

- a) A description of the alarming situation from the perspective of the minor's needs;
- b) The views of the minor, the parents and/or guardians, and persons involved in the minor's social environment;
- c) Identification details of the minor, the parents and/or guardians, and persons involved in the minor's social environment, including the minor's national registration number and the youth care offered in the past to the involved persons.

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<sup>30</sup> Article 35 IYC.

<sup>31</sup> Article 37 IYC.

<sup>32</sup> Article 37 IYC.

<sup>33</sup> Article 39, 1° IYC & article 42 § 3 IYC.

<sup>34</sup> Article 39, 2° IYC & article 42, § 3 IYC.

<sup>35</sup> Article 40 IYC & Article 72 Order IYC.

All members included in the decree are bounded by a pledge of professional secrecy, of which a violation is punishable<sup>36</sup>. To allow for information sharing between the organisations, Article 74 installs the notion of shared confidentiality. This allows for the actors of the integrated youth care to share client information between themselves, as long as it concerns only personal information on the client necessary for the youth care, it is shared only in the importance of the clients, and the consent of the client should be obtained as much as possible<sup>37</sup>. An important restriction is described in Article 75, that stipulates explicitly that information exchange between the mandated facilities on the one hand and the magistrates and the SDJ on the other is forbidden, unless it involves only basic information (identification and past care) or when the clients consent with the information exchange.

### 3.2.3 Juvenile public prosecutor's office (OM)

The juvenile public prosecutor's office is part of the public prosecutor's office of first instance, and is staffed with juvenile public prosecutors, secretaries, and a criminologist. There are twelve juvenile OM's in Flanders, each belonging to the judicial districts of a court of first instance. A juvenile public prosecutor will refer a case to court based on the information provided in the police reports and the referrals from the mandated facilities. In 2015, 70 percent of the initiated inflow of cases of alarming situations came from the police, while the other 30 percent includes inflow came from the mandated facilities or other sources, such as transfers of cases between territorial jurisdictions (College of Prosecutors General, 2015).

The juvenile public prosecutor has the monopoly of referring cases to a juvenile judge, if they regard this appropriate. This means neither the caregivers, the entrance gate, the mandated facilities, an individual citizen, or the clients can bring an alarming situation in front of a judge. The juvenile public prosecutor can only refer the case to a juvenile court when certain conditions are met. There are two sets of cumulative conditions that make a case admissible for juvenile court:

1. When it is not possible to install voluntary youth care and the possibilities for realising voluntary care are exhausted, meaning that the mandated facilities are consulted and these have referred the case to the public prosecutor<sup>38</sup>;
2. When a judicial measure is urgently needed and there is sufficient evidence that the minor has to be protected immediately from any form of physical or psychological violence, abuse, neglect, including sexual abuse, and voluntary care cannot be offered

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<sup>36</sup> Article 7 IYC.

<sup>37</sup> Article 74 IYC.

<sup>38</sup> Article 47, 1° IYC.

immediately because the necessary consent is not received<sup>39</sup>. This is the legal ground for what is called an ‘urgent intervention’.

This means that after a public prosecutor receives information from the police through their reports, they cannot yet refer this to court. They can choose to refer the case to a voluntary care-providing facility, or they can choose to refer the case to the mandated facility. They will generally opt for the latter option when they have either already exhausted the voluntary care, the problem is too complex to opt for a certain voluntary facility, or they experience reluctance to cooperate with voluntary care from the persons involved. The mandated facility then becomes responsible for the investigation into the societal need for youth care (see *supra*). When these conditions do not apply, or when they do not deem a referral to court appropriate yet, the juvenile public prosecutor can choose between several other options. They can further instruct the police to gather additional information on the case, or wait until a new referral arrives from the mandated facilities. The public prosecutor can also give the assignment to the police to refer the case to the direct accessible youth care, and to check whether the client has accepted this voluntary youth care. They can also dismiss the case without the need to explain or justify their decision to the mandated facilities or other involved parties (Put, 2015), make use of crisis care<sup>40</sup>, or suggest to the clients to apply for direct-accessible youth care. However, in practice the prosecutors will not doubt the assessment of the societal need of the mandated facilities and will bring almost all cases to the judge. When they refer a case to court without abiding to these conditions the case can be declared inadmissible for court. This means the court will not handle the case and the public prosecutor must find another way to install the appropriate youth care. A referral to court contains the report of the mandated facility, the police reports when applicable, and a qualification of the case<sup>41</sup>.

Moreover, the prosecutor can assign tasks of execution to the police, like the transport of a child to court, or to an institution. The public prosecutor does not have the freedom to choose which police-assistant they will employ for doing more investigation into a case; neither can they choose which judge will take on the case when a referral is made to the juvenile court.

The referral from the public prosecutor to a mandated facility contains the following details<sup>42</sup>:

- identification details of the minor and the parents (or guardians);
- identification details of the referring magistrate;

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<sup>39</sup> Article 47, 2° IYC.

<sup>40</sup> Article 44, §1, 1° IYC.

<sup>41</sup> Article 47, 1° & 2° IYC.

<sup>42</sup> Based on Article 63 Order IYC stating the details required in a motivated document by voluntary care-providers, even though this does not strictly apply to the public prosecutor.



- the reason for referring to the mandated facility;
- the confirmation that the involved parties are informed about the referral;
- the confirmation of the suspicion of societal need, with documentation backing this suspicion.

Together with the referral, the public prosecutor can choose to include the police statements within the file. Article 21bis of the Belgian code of criminal procedure<sup>43</sup> states that consultation of a case file by non-directly involved interested parties can be decided upon by the public prosecutor. In practice, these are usually included. When the presence of a criminologist at the OM allows this, a summary of the case will be sent to the mandated facilities to facilitate the work for the counsellors.

### 3.2.4 Juvenile court

The juvenile court is part of the court of first instance and is staffed by one or more juvenile judges and their registrars. The juvenile judge is the actor in the judicial youth care chain that can impose – after being summoned by the juvenile public prosecutor – a measure on the child and their parents/guardians. The judge is again fully independent to assess whether there is indeed an alarming situation and which measures are best fit. They will search for a measure that best fits the situation of the minor at the time of the ruling, not at the time of the first contact with the youth care system (Put, 2015). Before they make their decision, a judge will gather more information about the situation of the minor with the help of the SDJ<sup>44</sup>. They will request the SDJ to perform another investigation into the social background of the minor and to propose the best fitting measure given their findings<sup>45</sup>. This information will be added to the file, and will constitute an additional source of information on which the judges base their decision, next to the information already in the file and the statements at the hearing. From the moment the referral from the OM is received, a preparatory judicial procedure commences during which the judge can install a temporary measure that can be in effect for a maximum of six months, until the judge makes a decision on the merits of the case<sup>46</sup>. The preparatory phase allows the judge to perform the necessary investigations to make an informed decision whether a measure is necessary, and if so, which is the best fitting measure (Van den Wyngaert, 2006).

A juvenile judge, in the case of an alarming situation, can impose the following measures<sup>47</sup>:

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<sup>43</sup> Criminal Procedure Code of the Kingdom of Belgium of 1808, last amended in 2016 (Belgian official journal: November 27, 1808).

<sup>44</sup> Article 57 IYC.

<sup>45</sup> In theory also the public prosecutor can request this, but in practice the public prosecutor will ask the police.

<sup>46</sup> Article 51 IYC.

<sup>47</sup> Article 48 IYC.

- a. Offer the parents or guardians pedagogic directives;
- b. Put the minor under the supervision of the social service for a maximum of 1 year;
- c. Impose context guidance for a maximum of 1 year;
- d. Impose an educational project to the minor, possibly together with the parents or guardians;
- e. Make the minor visit an ambulatory facility for a maximum of 1 year;
- f. Let the minor who has reached a minimum age of 17 and has sufficient income live independently for a maximum of 1 year;
- g. Let the minor who has reached a minimum age of 17 live in accommodations under permanent supervision;
- h. Put the minor under the guidance of an admission and orientation centre for a maximum of 30 days;
- i. Put the minor under the guidance of an observation centre for a maximum of 60 days;
- j. Consigning the minor to foster care;
- k. Exceptionally, consigning the minor to an open facility for a maximum of one year;
- l. Exceptionally, consigning the minor who has reached a minimum age of 14 to a closed facility for a maximum of 3 months. This is only possible when the previous two measures have been rejected and a closed facility is necessary for the integrity of the child;
- m. Consign the minor to a psychiatric institution, if this is deemed necessary according to psychiatric expertise;

A judge can also add additional conditions to the measures b through m. These can only lead, however, to a specification of the measure<sup>48</sup>. The measures can be taken in the preparatory phase and after the hearing on the merits of the case, and can be retracted or replaced at any given time by the judge, at the request of the minor, their legal representative, the SDJ or the OM<sup>49</sup>. In case the referral was sent by the OM because of an urgent intervention, when there is no time to try voluntary care or no time to wait for the verdict of the mandated facilities, the judge can only impose measures c to m of the above list<sup>50</sup>.

The decisions of the court should reach both the OM and the SDJ. The juvenile judge needs to motivate the chosen measure<sup>51</sup>. The public prosecutor needs to be able to appeal the decision,

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<sup>48</sup> Article 49 IYC.

<sup>49</sup> Article 51 IYC.

<sup>50</sup> Article 53 IYC.

<sup>51</sup> Article 149 constitution; Article 37 Youth protection act.

or to execute the decision when applicable. In addition, when new police reports are received the OM needs to be aware whether there is already judicial youth care installed or not. The SDJ needs to be aware of the decision because they will be in many cases responsible for the actual instalment of the judicial care, and the follow-up of the care.

### 3.2.5 Social service for judicial youth care (SDJ)

The SDJ is founded by the Flemish decree concerning special youth support of 1985<sup>52</sup>, and has been preserved in the subsequent legal documents ever since. Similar to the OCJ, they are staffed by a team leader and counsellors. The counsellors cannot be a member of the voluntary youth care or the mandated facilities<sup>53</sup>. There are 14 SDJ's in Flanders, one for every judicial district. The SDJ will perform, at the request of a juvenile judge, an investigation on the social background of the minor<sup>54</sup>. The investigations should result in a written report containing the following information<sup>55</sup>:

- particularities on the identity of the minor, the parents and/or guardians, and people involved in the environment of the minor;
- an analysis of the situation of the above persons and the information necessary to assess the situation leading to the judicial measure;
- an estimation of the need for a judicial measure;
- if necessary, a report on the indication of the necessary care;
- when possible, an appointment of the caregiver that can execute the indicated care in the above report, and the intended length of said care;
- a mention of the natural or legal person bound to pay the costs of the care;
- an estimation of the possible contribution to the costs by the minor or by others;
- the intended use of a part of the child benefits;

The indication of necessary care that needs to be mentioned in the report should meet the following quality requirements<sup>56</sup>:

- To guarantee the multidisciplinary and expertise in the assessment of the indication;
- To arise completely independent of the available youth care;
- To correspond as much as possible to the need for care;
- To take into account the possibilities of the persons involved;

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<sup>52</sup> Article 29, § 2.

<sup>53</sup> Article 77 Order IYC.

<sup>54</sup> Article 57 IYC.

<sup>55</sup> Article 79 Order IYC.

<sup>56</sup> Article 31 Order IYC.

- To opt for the least drastic form of care in case of equal efficiency and effectiveness;
- To be ready 30 days after assignment;

After a measure has been imposed by a juvenile judge, the SDJ becomes responsible for the follow-up of the progression of the minor during the period of the measure. They should regularly visit the minor and the parents or guardians, check the reports on the evolution of the minor drafted by the judicial care-provider, and make sure the involved magistrates receive a copy of these reports<sup>57</sup>. The SDJ should also report to the judge when a drastic event takes place or when there is a change in environment that influences the course of the judicial care. When no drastic events happen, they should still draft up a report for the juvenile judge about the progress of the judicial youth care, at intervals of at least every six months. This report will contribute to the consideration of the judge in maintaining, replacing, withdrawing, or prolonging a measure. In addition, the juvenile public prosecutor should be updated through these reports, so that they can evaluate the situation and evaluate the measures of the judge given the current situation of the minor.

The SDJ will receive the report of the mandated facilities<sup>58</sup> that only contains limited information on past youth care. In the interest of the client, details about the history of past youth care are not readily shared from the voluntary youth care to the judicial youth care, to make sure the client gets a new and unbiased chance in the judicial youth care. Counsellors of the SDJ should not just continue the investigation from where the counsellor of the mandated facility left off, but has the liberty to construe their own view on the situation. On the other hand, it can be extremely useful for the SDJ to know more details on past events, to understand why a certain form of care was not successful, for example. This could save a lot of effort in proposing the same form of youth care to the same family when the reasons for failure remain unchanged. Therefore, a counsellor of the SDJ can ask for a transferal of the details about past youth care, but only when a signed agreement of the client is obtained.

The legal articles governing the professional secrecy<sup>59</sup> and the need to declare potential dangerous situations<sup>60</sup> contain room for interpretation, leaving the OCJ, VK, and SDJ with many grey areas on how to behave in certain situations, and when information can or cannot be shared. There will always be a need for an individual assessment by the counsellors. Therefore,

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<sup>57</sup> Article 82 Order IYC.

<sup>58</sup> Article 75 IYC.

<sup>59</sup> Article 458 Criminal code, article 7 & article 72 - 77 IYC.

<sup>60</sup> Article 458bis Criminal code.

the recommendation is made that they always put in written their reasoning for disclosing or withholding certain information in case they need to justify their decisions.

### 3.3 The constellation of the judicial youth care chain in theory and practice

The overview of the legislation gives an impression about the links that exist between the organisations. Certain organisations are not expected to have contact with one another, while others are in close contact. In theory, the police are only in direct contact with the OM, where the OM sends instructions for further investigation to the police and the police send reports to the OM. Indirect contact occurs with the mandated facilities, the courts, and the SDJ because the OM can add the police reports to the case file when they refer a case to the mandated facilities, and must send it in the file to the court. In court, the counsellors of the SDJ can look into the files when needed. The mandated facilities are in direct contact with the OM, since they receive referrals from the OM and send referrals to the OM. They are also in direct contact with the SDJ when the SDJ asks for a detailed report on the past care, if they have the permission of the client. The OM has, next to the direct contact with the police and the mandated facilities, contact with the court when they refer cases to court. The court has additional contact with the SDJ when requesting an investigation into the social background of the client. The SDJ thus has direct contact only with the mandated facilities and the court. The picture of the theoretical contacts is represented in Figure 9.

In practice, however, there is quite some direct contact between almost all the organisations in the chain, making it more of a network than a chain of organisations. The picture that emerged after asking the respondents in the study about their direct contacts (see Chapter 5) tells a different story about how the chain functions. In Figure 9 the actual contacts are presented, where only the court adheres to its theoretical contact, while all the other organisations have direct contact with all others, both initiated by themselves as well as by the counterpart.

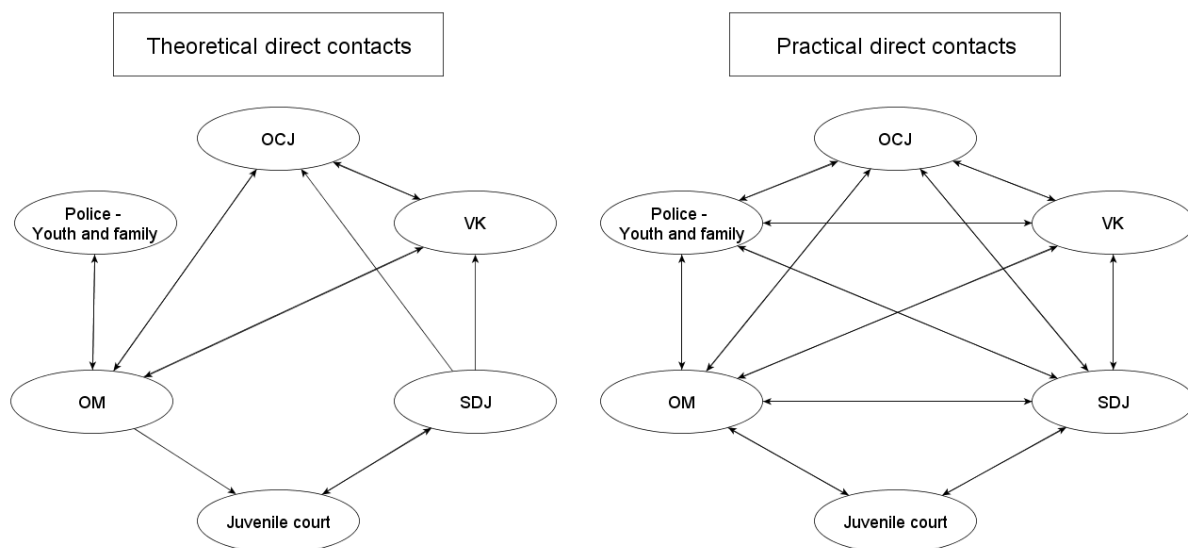


Figure 9 Theoretical and practical contacts among the organisations of the judicial youth care chain

### 3.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter the regulation coordinating the judicial youth care was reviewed with the aim of understanding which interactions legally take place between (the members of) the six organisations included in our case study. The organisations perform separate tasks. The police investigate the situation of a minor. It is the task of the mandated facilities to investigate and assess whether there is a societal need for care, and a willingness to cooperate with voluntary youth care. The public prosecutor objectively assesses whether the conditions are met to mandate a juvenile judge for a case, or instructs the mandated facilities and the police to gather more information to make a valid assessment. The juvenile judge has the responsibility to make a decision about which care should be mandated. The social service for judicial youth care assesses again the situation of the minor and advises the judge on the best appropriate youth care. They also monitor the implementation of the care measure.

The interactions between these organisations, and especially the information that is shared across the boundaries of the organisations during these interactions, will have a large impact on the course of the case of a minor. The results of a case handling can seriously affect the life of a minor and their environment, and can have broader societal impacts by reducing the prevalence of minors growing up in alarming situations. Therefore, it remains crucial that the information transfer between the organisations flows smoothly and efficiently. This is not self-evident given that the different organisations belong to different policy domains, have separate tasks, and function with a personal culture and philosophy, all while there is little authority over one another. All interactions between the organisations involving information exchange are

summarised in Table 1. Remarkably, no form of regular meetings is arranged through the legislation, and this has to be organised ad hoc by the organisations.

*Table 1 Overview of the legally described information exchange between the organisations of the judicial youth care*

<b>Information exchange</b>	<b>Involved organisations</b>
Mandatory negotiation between the mandated facilities	<i>Provider:</i> Mandated facility <i>Receiver:</i> Mandated facility
The referral of a case to the public prosecutor	<i>Provider:</i> Mandated facility <i>Receiver:</i> OM
Passing on the details of past youth care to the social service for judicial youth care	<i>Provider:</i> Mandated facility <i>Receiver:</i> SDJ
Reports of the police to the OM	<i>Provider:</i> Youth police <i>Receiver:</i> OM
Referral of the case to a mandated facility for an investigation into societal necessity	<i>Provider:</i> OM <i>Receiver:</i> Mandated facility
Facultative sharing of the police report	<i>Provider:</i> OM <i>Receiver:</i> Mandated facility
Instructions to the police for further investigations or execution and follow up of an assignment	<i>Provider:</i> OM <i>Receiver:</i> Police
The referral of a case to court	<i>Provider:</i> OM <i>Receiver:</i> Juvenile court
Circulation of the decisions of the court	<i>Provider:</i> Juvenile court <i>Receiver:</i> OM and SDJ
Request for the start of the social investigation by the social service	<i>Provider:</i> Juvenile court (or OM) <i>Receiver:</i> SDJ
The report on the social background of the minor	<i>Provider:</i> SDJ <i>Receiver:</i> Youth court (and OM)
Follow up reports and evolution reports after a measure has been imposed	<i>Provider:</i> SDJ <i>Receiver:</i> Juvenile court
Limited feedback that care is installed in alarming situations	<i>Provider:</i> Mandated facility <i>Receiver:</i> OM and court

In the next chapter, the first phase of the research is described in detail, namely the preliminary study that gave a lot of input for choosing the direction of the research in terms of specifying the research questions, choosing the appropriate research design, and demarcating the space and time limitations of the study.



## Chapter 4 Determination of the research focus:

### Preliminary study

The judicial youth protection system can be considered an exemplary case of a high risk/high interdependency context. In an exploratory study by De Bruyn (2006) it was determined that in this particular segment of the judicial system the interactions are high and the interdependencies are particularly outspoken. However, based on the literature review not sufficient knowledge on the judicial field and the interdependencies between judicial actors could be gained. To demarcate the research project it was therefore necessary to gather more insights from the field.

To recapitulate, after outlining of the research problem the following broad aims were defined in Chapter 1 before the start of the preliminary study:

1. To detect what the current levels of trust and/or distrust between the organisations involved in the judicial youth protection system are;
2. To understand how the level of interorganisational trust and/or distrust can best be measured for the judicial youth protection system in Belgium;
3. To unveil the nature of interorganisational trust and/or distrust within the judicial youth protection system.

It remained unclear how broad or how narrow the judicial youth protection system should be defined, which particular interdependencies exist between the organisations, and how accessible the organisations are for research purposes. Moreover, a methodological challenge concerned the matching of models to the research subject's experiences. If frameworks are imposed unthinkingly, measurements may not reflect what really matters in the empirical reality of specific trustors and trustees. Some flexibility inherent to the method is an advantage, and less flexible methods could presuppose inputs, aspects, and vulnerabilities that may be invalid (Lyon et al., 2015). As mentioned, the trust process is deemed universal but variform, and trust could be different for every other context. Uninformed decisions about the design and the course of the study would decrease the chances of executing a successful study that also produces relevant knowledge. Therefore, a preliminary study was executed to solve the issues still apparent before the start of the main interviews. Piloting refers to the conduct of preliminary research, prior to the main study. It provides a structured opportunity for informed

reflection on, and modification of, the research design, the research instruments, costs, and timing. The central goals of the preliminary study were the following:

1. To define which actors are the key actors in the judicial youth protection chain;
2. To determine for which tasks these actors are most dependent on each other;
3. Determine what aspects of the trust process are most relevant and how this process is experienced in the judicial context;
4. To test the research methods that could be applied to study the trust process in the context of juvenile justice.

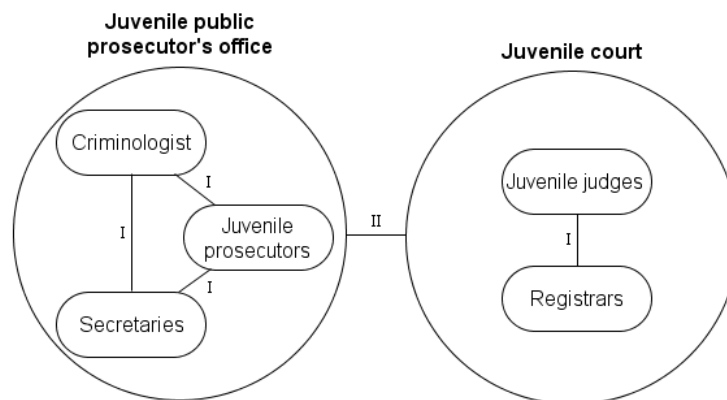
During the preliminary study, the context of the judicial youth protection system was explored and several design options were piloted to resolve persisting dilemmas. Since interviews during the preliminary study and interviews during the main study targeted the same research topic, both interview phases contributed to answering the main research questions and to continually fine-tuning the approach it was not always straightforward to draw an exact line between where the preliminary study ended and where the main research started. However, the first eight semi-structured interviews were especially decisive for addressing the questions of research focus and design, while the subsequent interviews offered more information to answer the narrowed research questions (see *infra*). It was deemed important to dedicate a separate chapter to this decision making process because it offers the reader more insight in why certain decisions were made, and can inform other researchers facing similar dilemmas in their own research.

This chapter offers a detailed description of the preliminary phase of the research. First, the applied methodology of the study is presented, namely the use of exploratory in-depth interviewing. Second, the resulting choices on the demarcation of both the case and the conceptualisation, and the final design of the data collection methods are presented, as well as the resulting narrowed research questions guiding the subsequent main research phase. A summary is presented in the last section of this chapter.

#### 4.1 Preliminary study methodology: Exploratory interviews

The exploration of the context and the piloting of the data collection methods were done through in-depth interviewing of actors involved in the judicial youth protection system. As a starting point, one judicial division was selected that was not an extreme case, easily reachable, and had good ties with the research institute. The initial scope was restricted to two organisations: the juvenile public prosecutor's office (OM) and the juvenile court. The different positions held within the organisations of the preliminary case are depicted in Figure 10. Eight respondents participated, namely the Crown prosecutor of the district, two juvenile public

prosecutors, the criminologist of the OM, the head of the secretariat of the OM, two juvenile judges, and one registrar of the juvenile court. A meeting also took place with the administrator-general of the youth welfare agency of the Flemish government to discuss the possibilities of including the OCJ and SDJ in the study and explore the interactions between these organisations and the judicial organisations.



*Figure 10 The different positions held within the preliminary-case organisations*

The semi-structured interviews contained broad questions on the structure of the respondent's organisation, the respondent's contacts with (the members of) their own and the other organisation, what trust and distrust meant to them in their context, what their intra-organisational (I) and interorganisational (II) expectations were, which context-specific factors contribute to their levels of trust and distrust, and the possible advantages and disadvantages of trusting or distrusting the other in their professional context. A more detailed description of the data collection and analysis will be given in the next chapter describing the methodology of the entire study, since both phases followed a similar approach.

## 4.2 Demarcation of the case

The preliminary exploration of the field resulted in several decisions concerning the demarcation of the case. The most interesting pathways for studying trust in this context were chosen, taking into account both the possibility for gathering the most in-depth information on trust experiences in judicial interactions, and safeguarding the uniformity of the studied interactions. The decisions concerned the inclusion of six interconnected organisations, the restriction to observe only interactions on cases of alarming situations, the restriction to the Flemish community, and the restriction to only interdependencies involving information sharing on case level, all described in detail below.

#### 4.2.1 Demarcation of the included organisations

A first result of the preliminary interviews was that the number of incorporated organisations increased, while the type of included interactions decreased. For the preliminary study, only the OM and the juvenile court were included, interviewing both the magistrates and the supporting administrative personnel to explore where the actual dependencies between and within the organisations were positioned. This was motivated by the assumption that these two central organisations in the judicial decision-making process have many interactions and interdependencies, and that trust between and within these two organisations would have an important impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of how child-cases are handled. During the interviewing process, it became clear that although the organisations did interact and were dependent in certain respects, they were more dependent on other organisations in the chain. A juvenile public prosecutor would send the case to the court when the legal requirements were met without hesitation. They also add little information to the case, meaning that the judges rely only slightly on the discretionary power or the information-gathering abilities of the prosecutors. Also the prosecutors depend only faintly on the judges for the execution of their own tasks, since most of their tasks happen before the court is involved, and end once the court takes over. Only when the judges do not accept the case, their work is affected. The following quote illustrates how a prosecutor viewed the dependency between the OM and the court:

*There is not much dependence there, especially for alarming situations, once we refer the case to the court it will be continued there and the case is sort of gone from us. [...] There is only dependence in whether they will accept the case, especially in cases of urgency they might not accept, and then you need to find a solution on your own, which is not easy because usually you refer to court when you don't see a solution within your own power. (C)*

At the end of each interview, respondents were asked whether important aspects of their interactions were overlooked during the interview. It was stated by the prosecutors and judges that their work depends more on whether the mandated facilities decide to send a case to the judicial system, whether the police pick up a certain alarming situation, and whether the SDJ supports them with reliable information. Therefore, the scope of the case study was broadened from **the OM and the court** to include their direct partners: **the juvenile police, the mandated facilities (OCJ and VK), and the SDJ**. Next to this, it was also frequently stated that the prosecutors and judges depend on the direct and indirect accessible care providers who deliver large amounts of information about the evolution of a child under their care, however,

these were not included to maintain the feasibility of the study. The supporting administrative secretariat of the OM and the registry of the juvenile court were excluded from the main study because these interactions are of a more standardised nature where not many vulnerabilities could be detected, decreasing the depth of information obtained on the topic of trust. As such, the final included actors are the ones building cases by gathering information and making decisions on the case. They are not the ones involved in the actual provision of the youth care or the administrative support.

#### 4.2.2 Demarcation of the subject of the interactions

Including more organisations for the case study meant that the included interactions became more versatile. To make sure that the studied interactions remained uniform and the interviews did not become scattered, one specific type of legal cases was chosen as the focus of the research: **cases of minors in an alarming situation**. Judicial youth protection handles two kinds of legal cases of minors: juvenile justice for minors who have committed an act that can be defined as an offence, and judicial youth care for minors who find themselves in an alarming situation. The interactions between the organisations when dealing with alarming situations differ from the interactions when dealing with offending minors in the sense that another legal framework applies and different actors are involved, creating different vulnerabilities. Therefore, it can be assumed that trust experiences depend on which type of case an interorganisational interaction concerns. Focussing on interactions concerning alarming situations provides the possibility for an in-depth study of trust in the context of complex interdependencies in two important ways. First, more actors are involved in the process, namely adding the mandated facilities, which makes judicial youth care a more complex cooperation than juvenile justice, offering more interdependencies to study. Second, youth care cases can be more complex and more sensitive, since an offence is easier defined, with less grey areas than in the case of an alarming situation. The decision whether a societal need for care is present is influenced even more by the background of the child, and the possibility for voluntary aid is continuously explored, resulting in more paths during the decision-making process and more insecurity for each actor.

#### 4.2.3 Geographical demarcation

Considering only alarming situations also led to a decision on the geographical demarcation of the case. The study was restricted to the **Flemish community** because the regulations governing the processes and possibilities of judicial youth care are constructed on a communal level, meaning that the judicial authorities residing in the Flemish, French, or German-speaking communities of Belgium each have their separate legal framework and coordinating organisations. As such, there exist small but significant differences between the communities,

which could compromise the homogeneity of the research context. Additionally, pragmatic reasons guided the specific choice for the Flemish region. The existing familiarity of the researcher with the Flemish context, language, and culture is expected to contribute to improving the rapport between the interviewer and the respondents, which can benefit greatly the quality of the data gathering process (Leech, 2002). Despite these advantages, this also means that the results of the study will be less convincingly generalised to the whole of Belgium.

#### 4.2.4 Demarcation of the content of the interactions

Finally, to contribute even more to the uniformity of the object of study, only one type of interaction taking place in the handling of cases of minors in alarming situations was focused on, namely **case-information exchange**. Due to the particularistic nature of trust (Luo, 2005), meaning that trust is directed towards a specific object, it can be assumed that general measurements of trust in the network might not provide many insights in the true nature of the trust process. The selection of the interactions involving information exchange was decided on the observation that most of the interactions and interdependencies described by the respondents already involved information exchange. Thus, not many interactions were excluded from the study; however, they are labelled more clearly. Excluded interactions where no information on cases is shared are the interactions during general meetings on the approach and coordination of the cooperation. Although trust will certainly have a large impact on the proceedings of these meetings, they were disregarded because they appeared to be less frequent and would scatter the focus of the interviews.

The exchanged information between the organisations could be divided into three categories based on their content: mandatory information, optional information, and prohibited information. This categorisation is based on the preliminary interviews together with what was known from the legislation. The first distinguished form of exchanged information is **mandatory information**. It is standard information that legally has to be exchanged between the organisations and consists mainly of the information exchange set out in the legislation. Examples of mandatory information are client identification data that should be in the referral document send by a mandated facility to the OM, and the objective observations of a situation in the police statements to the OM. Mandatory information constitutes the core of the operational functioning of the judicial youth care, and many decisions are based on this type of information. When this information is not exchanged, cases will go unnoticed or will not be dealt with in a comprehensive manner by the successive organisations in the chain. Interorganisational exchange of mandatory information happens predominantly in writing often by mail, by standard forms and documents, leaving a transcript of the information. This

makes it an impersonal and formal manner of communication. This information sharing process can be slow, so when there is an urgent matter they can choose to transfer it verbally. However, a written transcript will be produced afterwards to make sure it can be added to the case file. This information is exchanged on a daily basis, and the protocols to be followed are clear, which makes it easier for both parties involved in the exchange to know what is expected of them. Therefore, there is quite some certainty involved in this exchange and it happens in a predictable, relatively stable environment (Smith, 2001), decreasing the interdependency and vulnerability in this interaction. The following quotes of respectively a public prosecutor and a counsellor of the VK illustrate how mandatory information is exchanged, and that it is done based on the legal directions:

*We pass on things, and most of it is on paper. We pass our file to the juvenile judge, no secrets there. When we call for a court referral and this is urgent then we will communicate by telephone and explain further. But then we compose a file for this case which they can read. (M)*

*When we perform an investigation into the societal need for care, at times we need to send an e-mail to the public prosecutor to give notice we are working on it and where we're at. It's because this is part of the procedure we do this; if not we wouldn't always send this. (J)*

The second form of exchanged information is **optional information**. This is information that can be shared between the organisations, but there is no legal obligation to do so. This was termed 'soft information' by one of our respondents and includes side information on pending cases and feedback on past decisions. Even though the organisations are not legally bound to share this information with each other, it has an important influence on the relationships between the organisations, the efficiency with which they cooperate, and the outcome of the decision-making process. The respondents acknowledge the importance of this type of information exchange and the crucial need for it to be shared on a voluntary basis. This more informal form of communication on pending cases can streamline the decision making process and save valuable time and effort, as the following counsellor of the SDJ and public prosecutor describe respectively:

*If we want to advise a certain measure it is often explored beforehand whether the judge will follow the advice or not. In order not to put extra effort in making a document for the registration to the non-direct accessible youth care while you know it won't happen anyway. So in this regard we try to align how they see it, how I see it, and can we come to a shared stance? (R)*

*Sometimes I pick up the phone when a case is with the mandated facility while we keep receiving notifications from the police. Sometimes the counsellors don't know about these notifications because clients don't tell them. I think it's important to notify them, for them to continue their work. And if for them a simple notification suffices, it's not controlling them, it's information flow which is – according to me – indispensable. (M)*

In the case of optional information exchange, the transfer depends on the individual goodwill of the holder of the information, and on the organisational features enabling or impeding this kind of information flow. The information exchange usually takes place in an informal setting, but the organisations can also create platforms where to share this subsidiary information, such as monthly meetings. It is information that is highly personal, subjective, and informal and tends to be local and not found in documents (Smith, 2001).

The third form of information flow in the classification is **prohibited information**. In our specific interaction of case-information exchange, this includes information that falls under the professional confidentiality, but in other contexts, this can include other confidential information, such as gossip or business secrets. Examples are information on the criminal background of a client or detailed information on the course of the voluntary youth care without the consent of the client. In exceptional cases confidential information can be shared, namely when a clear and acute dangerous situation can only be averted by disclosing confidential information. The information exchange is then no longer prohibited and becomes mandatory. Respondents acknowledge that confidential information is sometimes shared to circumvent the restrictions put on them by the legislator, with the purpose of coming to better decisions. As was the case for the exchange of optional information, the exchange of prohibited information can improve the efficiency of the decision-making process and is believed to lead to better measures for the child and the family. The communication will happen in person, to make sure there is no written transcript available. It usually takes place by phone, which makes it a fast way of information exchange. This type of information will not be shared on a regular basis, and the conventions for doing so will be less clear, rendering the insecurities and vulnerabilities of

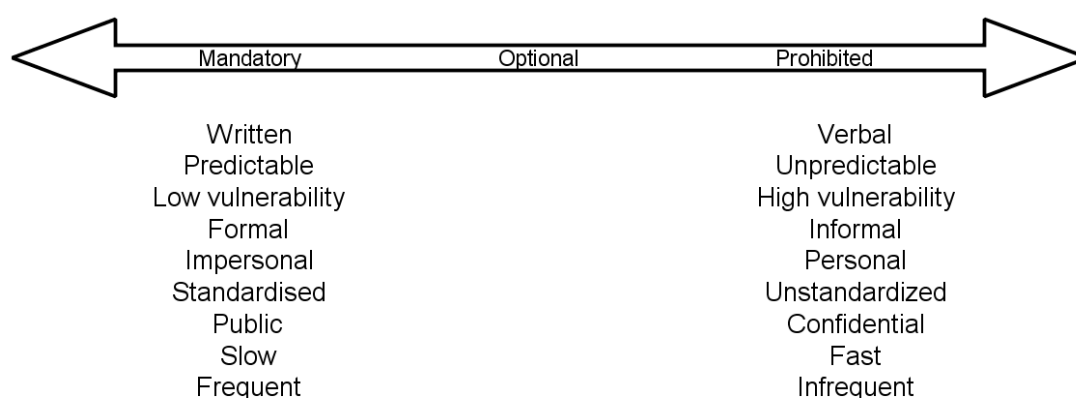


the exchange higher. Sometimes, creative solutions are sought to not overstep any boundaries but still be able to convey a message that maybe should not have been conveyed. An example is the communication of a counsellor of the SDJ circumventing an unnecessary registration of a minor:

*When we call to register a youngster for a residential institution, it normally happens through an electronic system. And the persons operating this should in fact not tell us whether a place will become available or not, but what they can say is “If I were you I would make a registration and make sure it’s done in time.” Then you can deduct from that there is a good possibility a place will become available soon. Or when they say “you shouldn’t hurry too much with the registration” we also realise there is no place. Those are the tricks of the trade.*

(R)

While the developed typology separates three categories of information, in practice this will be more of a continuum on which each information exchange can be positioned. For the information providers and receivers it will not always be clear to what category a certain piece of information belongs. Moreover, within one interaction, often a mix of different pieces of information belonging to different categories can be exchanged. Figure 11 represents this continuum together with the dimensional features that will vary between the different extremes on the axis.

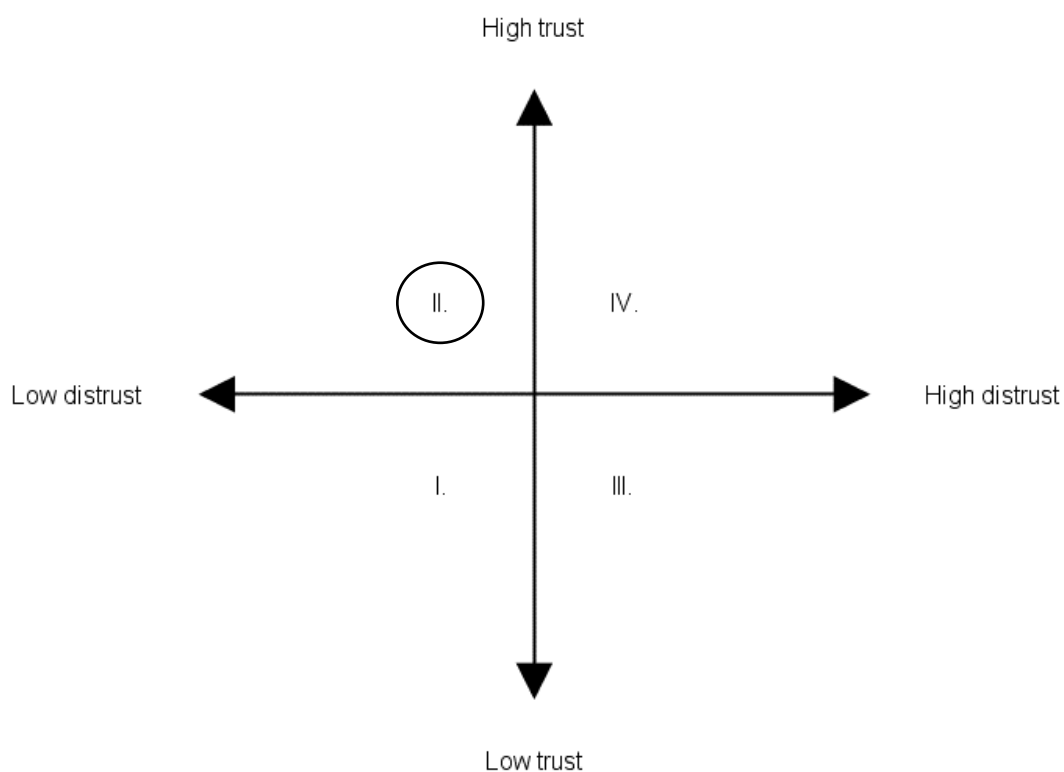


*Figure 11 The information typology should be perceived on a continuum with varying dimensions from one end to the other*

#### 4.3 Demarcation of the conceptualisation

The preliminary interviews made it possible to assess what aspects associated with the broad notion of trust would be interesting to explore in-depth in the context of the judicial youth care,

and what aspects would better be left aside because of their limited significance. Four important conclusions were drawn from the preliminary exploration that had their impact on the theoretical demarcation and conceptualisation. First, the decision was made **to no longer focus on the aspect of distrust**. It was initially envisioned to consider this aspect throughout the entire study given the ongoing discussion on the difference between trust and distrust in the literature, and the need for additional knowledge to better distinguish distrust from trust. However, the respondents did not label any of their interactions as being characterised by distrust. Only variations between moderate to high trust were mentioned, without being accompanied by distrust. This was also visually established during the interviews, where the respondents were asked to place their intra- and interorganisational trust and distrust levels on a two-dimensional graph based on Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies (1998) (see Figure 12). All interviewee's judgements, regarding either intra-organisational or interorganisational trust, were situated in the second quadrant, representing the situation of high trust and low distrust.



*Figure 12 Coordinated graph based on Lewicki et al. (1998, p. 445), first applied in this form by Oomsels (2016, p. 57). All judgements of the respondents from the preliminary study were situated in quadrant II, representing high levels of trust with low levels of distrust*

Second, the focus on **intra-organisational trust was omitted from the research**. The *interorganisational* interactions contained stronger interdependencies than the *intra-organisational* interactions, since individuals within the studied organisations function predominantly on their own. They are more dependent on the input of the other organisations

than on the input of their own colleagues. Even though a good understanding between the colleagues was seen as important and useful, especially when one wanted to discuss their ideas about a case with a colleague, it was not needed for much else, as the following public prosecutor describes:

*I'm not that dependent of my colleagues, because we each strictly have our own cabinet, our own files, there is a clear division. We take on cases based on place of residence of the minor, and sometimes when they move there is a transfer, but the distribution of tasks is so clear for me that we are independent of each other. (C)*

Third, the focus on *interorganisational* trust was **broadened with the inclusion of interpersonal trust**. The interviews were set up to ask only about trust of the respondent in the counterpart organisation as a whole, based on the definition of Fulmer & Gelfand (2012, p. 1174) as “a psychological state comprising willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of an organization”. The respondents, however, framed their experiences mostly in the context of interactions with particular members of the other organisation throughout their discourse. Apparently, due to the limited size of the organisations, each member of an organisation has personal interactions with most members of the other organisation. This makes the willingness to be vulnerable more based on the assessment one makes of the trustworthiness of the counter-individual than on the trustworthiness of the organisation as a whole. In that case, interpersonal trust is concerned, defined by Fulmer & Gelfand (2012, p. 1174) as “a psychological state comprising willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of a specific other or others”. In the main study, the notion of *interorganisational* trust is kept for the survey administration, since it was not possible to ask respondents about their trust experiences with each individual of the other organisation due to practical considerations. *Interorganisational* trust and *interpersonal* trust are not necessarily correlated to one another. The following respondent states this perfectly:

*In many cases, trust has to do with the cooperation, and this happens more with an individual than with an organisation. You work with a certain person from a department. You can have a department of which you believe their vision doesn't suit yours, but with a person it can work perfectly fine. And the more the cooperation improves the more you understand what you can help each other with. (R)*

Fourth, the choice was made **to adhere to the conceptual framework of Dietz (2011)**, which was introduced in Chapter 2, as a lens for analysing the experiences of the respondents (see Figure 13). This decision carries far-reaching consequences since it also means leaving other conceptual frameworks behind. For example, while Dietz sees each form of trust originating from the same process (albeit with a possible different emphasis on the separate aspects), other authors see trust in different contexts to also be different in their content and how they originate (e.g. Bachmann, 2011). Another consequence is that trustworthiness will be strictly separated from the concept of trust, and both will be investigated separately. After coding the interviews without using a prior codebook, it was detected that all codes fitted the concepts that were described by Dietz in the universal trust model. The codes referring to trustworthiness caught mainly aspects of ability, benevolence, and integrity, (ABI), while the input factors could be labelled under the categories described by Dietz. The concepts of Dietz were approached as sensitising concepts for analysing the main interviews. A sensitising concept gives the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances but lacks specification of attributes. Consequently, a sensitising concept does not enable the user to move directly to the instance and its relevant content and instead merely suggest directions along which to look (Blumer, 1954), which offers a good approach for inductive research.

Not all aspects of Dietz's framework were further investigated in the main study, since this was not possible or not relevant. For example, concerning trustworthiness, the three main dimensions (ability, benevolence, and integrity) were further zoomed in on, without an expansion as suggested by Dietz in his framework, made clear by adding "etc." to ABI (see Figure 13). Several scholars have suggested that other dimensions should be added such as predictability or familiarity. However, when using just the three dimensions (ABI) as sensitizing concepts during the analysis of the interviews most statements regarding perceived trustworthiness could be coded. There was no need to introduce a new concept to code certain undefined transcript segments. This supports the theoretical assumption that these are three sufficient dimensions to conceptualise an individual's assessment of the other's trustworthiness. The output-stage, containing the risk-taking behaviours, will not be included in this dissertation, since this behavioural component is difficult to observe and requires a completely different approach involving participatory observation, nor will the feedback mechanisms be part of the focus<sup>61</sup>. The input factors concerning individual factors of the trustor and the trustee

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<sup>61</sup> For the interested reader, another aspect, the positive and negative outcomes of trusting, has been attended to in an earlier co-authored article: Oomsels, P., Callens, M., Vanschoenwinkel, J., & Bouckaert, G. (2016). Functions and dysfunctions of interorganizational trust and distrust in the public sector. *Administration & Society*. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0095399716667973>

were also disregarded since there was no assumption that in this particular context these factors would play a different role than in any other context. Especially the institutional and relational characteristics, specific to this context, were further evaluated. Figure 13 illustrates which parts of the trust process are explored in this study.

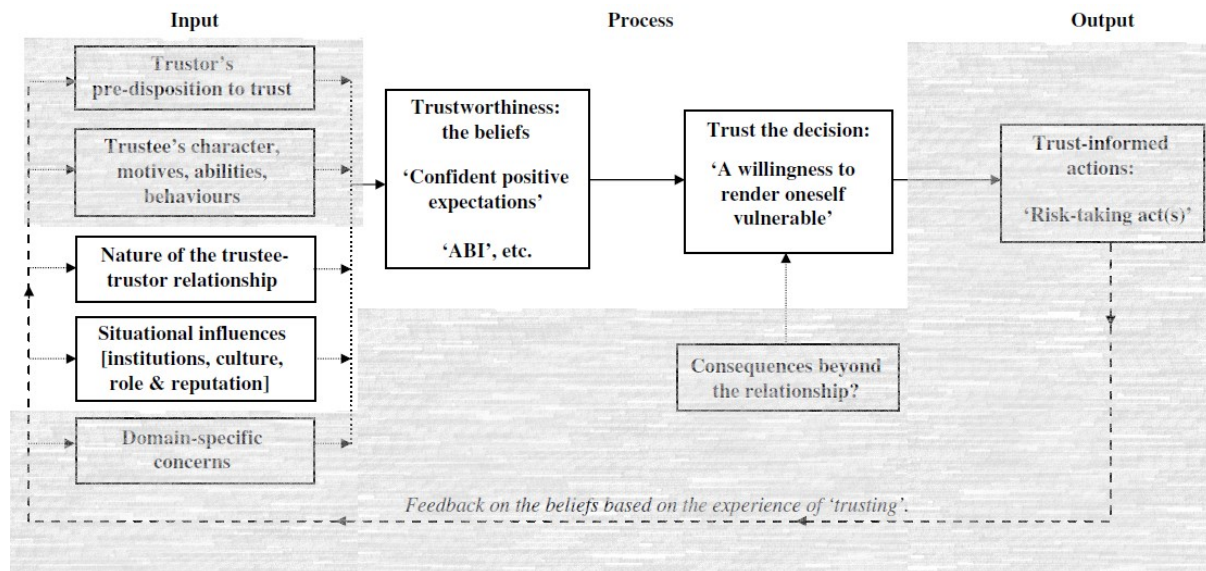


Figure 13 The universal trust model depicted by Dietz (2011, p. 219), covering the segments that are not part of this research project

#### 4.4 Choices regarding the research methodology

During the preliminary study, several data collection methods were considered and much was learned about the value and challenges of applying quantitative and qualitative research methods for studying the topic of interorganisational trust. The encountered drawbacks and potential benefits of both approaches are presented below, providing arguments for the choices towards the final research design.

##### 4.4.1 The benefits and limitations of a quantitative approach

The preliminary interviews did not initially comprise a quantitative part, but they were of vital importance to determine further development of the quantitative part. It was envisioned that after the preliminary interviews, testable relevant hypotheses would have emerged, and a reliable measurement instrument could be developed in the form of a survey to be sent out to a sample of the population. However, it was quickly decided that more interviews would be required to explore the newly established directions described above further, by including also the other organisations and by focusing on the new interactions before a reliable survey instrument could be developed.

After further interviewing and attempts to develop a survey instrument, it was decided that an anonymous online or mail survey would most likely not be successful in this context. Special challenges for the design and application of a survey emerged because the case spanned different organisations and since trust is a relational trait, questions needed to be adapted to each of the relationships within the chain. Next to this, trust is a sensitive topic which could increase nonresponse (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007) and is also a broad topic, difficult to grasp with a limited number of standardised items in a questionnaire. Given the current state of knowledge about trust and the limited development of valid quantitative tools applicable in this context, it was deemed more valuable to keep part of the data collection by means of in-depth interviewing. However, a quantitative aspect remained in the study, which served two specific purposes. First, the quantitative part offers descriptive data on the background of the case and aids the interpretation and triangulation of the interview findings. Second, it contributes to the development of the measurement of interorganisational trust, especially since the included part contains an innovative approach of organisational network analysis, overcoming some of the challenges with studying interorganisational trust.

After deciding a population wide survey had only small chances of success, the focus turned to performing a social network analysis (SNA) to map out the trust levels between the members of the organisations. Even though consensus hasn't been reached on the definition of a social network (Bergenholtz & Waldstrom, 2011), one of the most often cited sources defines it as "a set of nodes (e.g. persons, organisations) linked by a set of social relationships (e.g. friendships, transfer of funds, overlapping membership) of a specified type" (Laumann et al., 1978, p. 458). The advantage of a network analysis over other techniques is that it looks at trust in a relational way, and not in an individual way. Social network analysis entails measuring the relationships between organisations, or between individuals from different organisations, depending on your unit of analysis. While exploring the possibility of applying SNA for this project, it became clear that surveying on the interpersonal level would generate a large problem of drop out and social desirable responses. Trust is a sensitive topic, and the need to include all individuals from all organisations into the study was a drawback, given the high workload of the respondents. However, the levels of trust between the organisations can be measured, to look for patterns occurring in the network and to link it to background variables, such as the trustor or trustee organisation. SNA is also a useful managerial tool to optimise relationships and structures in an organisation, to expose brokers or bottlenecks, or to estimate the effects of future changes in the organisation on information flow. Data collection takes place by means of a survey, where respondents are asked to give information about their relationships with the other

organisations. Since this type of data collection is particularly sensitive to missing data, it has to be executed with the greatest care.

#### 4.4.2 The benefits and limitations of a qualitative approach

After analysing the merits and limits of a quantitative approach in our context, it was decided that adhering to a strictly quantitative approach would have resulted in invalid and invaluable results. Throughout the preliminary study, it also became clear that too little was known about the mechanisms behind the trust process. The interviewing approach as a data collection method was also more flexible and allowed for fully understanding the trust process in this particular context. Many new insights surfaced during the interviews, and a feeling remained that important insights would be missed when abandoning the qualitative approach. The importance of establishing rapport with the respondents before they open up about the more sensitive aspects of trust was also seen as a necessary condition for gathering valid and reliable information on the subject, which cannot be achieved with an anonymous survey. With interviews, it is easier to gain trust of the respondent and to allow the respondents to nuance their statements, with less risk of misinterpretation. The in-depth interviewing allowed for better adapting the questions to the situation of the respondent, given they came from different organisations and districts with different sizes. This made it possible to unveil the complex trust process. What interviewing does not allow for is to make convincing statements about the strength of correlations between certain variables. However, given the exploratory nature of the research, this is not yet the most relevant issue at hand.

#### 4.5 Narrowing of the research questions

The initial aims of the study were based on the assumptions that, (1) interorganisational trust can have a serious impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the cooperation of a network of organisations; (2) that this might be problematic in a high risk, high autonomy, high interdependency network; and (3) the judicial youth protection system is a good example of such network. Hence, drawing a comprehensive picture of the interorganisational trust phenomenon in this context should add valuable knowledge to both the field of interorganisational trust and the field of judicial cooperation.

The initial preliminary study offered new information regarding the initial questions, and there was a need to adapt the research questions according to the initial findings. Incorporating the new angles led to the formulation of the following four research questions:

1. What is the general perceived trustworthiness of the members of the judicial youth care chain?

2. What qualities, in the context of the judicial youth care chain, make a member to be perceived as trustworthy?
3. What context specific inputs influence the perception of trustworthiness, and how do these increase or decrease trustworthiness?
4. What is the impact of perceived trustworthiness of (a member of) an organisation on the willingness to exchange *mandatory*, *optional*, or *prohibited information* with the members of that organisation?

These research questions remain broadly formulated, and combine descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory questions. Therefore, the investigation by means of a mixed-method approach will be most fitting.

#### 4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter gave an overview of what the preliminary phase at the beginning of the study entailed. Thorough piloting was necessary because many questions about the focus and direction of the study remained open after the literature review on both interorganisational trust and cooperation between (judicial) organisations. The first interviews contributed to a preliminary exploration of the field, and enabled to clear out many of these dilemmas. Because of the preliminary study, decisions could be made in four key areas of the study design: the scope of the case study, the conceptualisation of interorganisational trust, the data collection methods, and the refinement of the research questions. The scope was broadened to include six organisations, and restricted to only those actors linked to the judicial decision making process in cases of judicial youth care in the Flemish community, and to only those interactions involving information exchange on individual cases. The concepts of distrust and intra-organisational trust have been discarded from the study, while the concept of interpersonal trust was included as a specific area of interest. After open coding of the initial interviews, all codes could be captured by the universal trust model of Graham Dietz, which was from then on used as conceptual framework guiding the further exploration. The intention of performing mainly quantitative data collection was left for a mixed-method approach after the discovery of the limitations and possibilities of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. The research questions were narrowed down according to the theoretical and practical findings above. In the next chapter, the methodology applied for the entire study is described in detail, before turning to the results of the main study, offering an answer to the narrowed but still highly exploratory research questions.



## Chapter 5 Methodology: A case study approach

From Chapter 2 on the theoretical background it can be concluded that ever since trust has been identified as an interesting dimension in managing relations, be it between individuals or between (private or public) organisations, there has been a constant debate about what trust is, and how to measure it. This lack of agreement resulted in the gradual acceptance of the complexity of the concept of trust, together with the acceptance that numerous different methodologies can and should contribute to a broader understanding of the phenomenon (Isaeva et al., 2015). The simultaneous lack of convergence on what trust means in general with the lack of previous research on trust in a judicial context, fuelled the need to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon in this specific context. By combining the literature review and the results of the preliminary study, the research questions were shaped and refined. They remained rather broad, which dictated the adoption of an exploratory nature of the main study.

As a reminder, these are the main research questions (RQ's) formulated after the exploration of the relevant issues concerning interorganisational trust in a judicial setting:

1. *What* is the general perception of trustworthiness of the members of the judicial youth care chain?
2. *What* qualities, in the context of the judicial youth care chain, make a member to be perceived as trustworthy?
3. *What* context specific inputs influence the perception of trustworthiness, and *how* do they increase or decrease trustworthiness?
4. *What* is the impact of perceived trustworthiness of (a member of) an organisation on the willingness to exchange *mandatory, optional, or prohibited information* with the members of that organisation?

These questions cover the trust process as depicted in Figure 14. RQ1 is descriptive in nature, RQ2 is an exploratory *what* question, RQ3 is partly exploratory, and partly explanatory, and RQ4 is an explanatory research question.

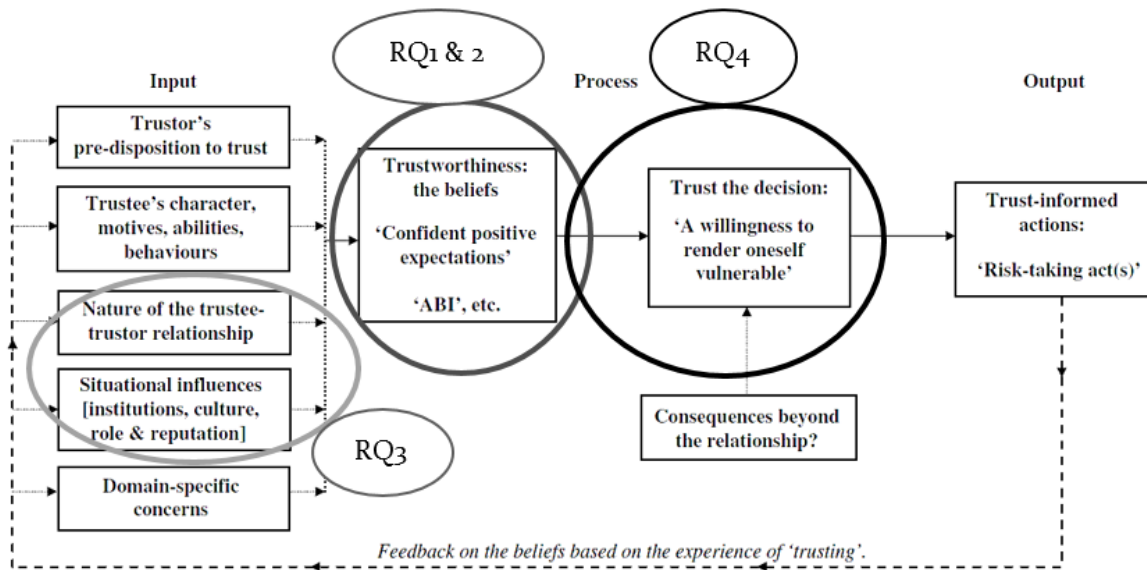


Figure 14 The trust process under investigation with the subsequent research questions (adapted from Dietz (2011, p. 219))

In this chapter, the methodology of the study is described in detail, together with the arguments for the methodological choices made. It is explained how the research questions steered to a decision to perform a single-case study of the judicial youth care chain. The design of the single-case study is clarified and the processes of data collection and data analysis are reported on, including due recognition of the blank and blind spots of the applied methodology.

### 5.1 The application of iterative-inductive reasoning

While RQ<sub>1</sub> is mainly descriptive in nature and can be answered by applying quantitative methods, RQ<sub>2</sub> and RQ<sub>3</sub> are exploratory *what* and *how* question, best answered by an exploratory qualitative approach. RQ<sub>4</sub> could be answered both by a quantitative correlation analysis to measure the strengths of the effects, or by an exploratory analysis to explore the mechanisms behind the links. When *what* and *how* questions are exploratory in nature it is justifiable to adopt an exploratory case research strategy (Yin, 2014). Exploratory research usually starts from inductive reasoning, where the goal is mainly to build new hypothesis and theories based on empirical evidence, rather than testing and refining existing hypothesis. Theories provide the means to understand how people interpret situations and why their world is as it is (Maxwell, 2013). As such, the inductive approach starts with observations, and theories are proposed towards the end of the research process as a result of the observations (Goddard & Melville, 2004). It involves “the search for patterns from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns through a series of hypotheses” (Bernard, 2013, p. 7) and the researcher is free in terms of altering the direction for the study after the research

process had commenced. Inductive reasoning is based on learning from experience and is often referred to as a “bottom-up” approach to knowing, in which the researcher uses observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon that is being studied (Lodico et al., 2010).

However, the inductive approach does not imply disregarding theories when formulating research questions and objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2012), and with respect to the issue of using existing theoretical constructs to guide theory-building research, two different approaches may be taken (Paré & Elam, 1997). In the first, the researcher works within an explicit conceptual framework that consists of a selection of concepts and relations among them, grouped to see the major concepts simultaneously in their relations to one another. Therefore, a conceptual framework becomes a “researcher's first cut at making some explicit theoretical statements” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 91). In the second approach, the researcher tries not to be constrained by prior theory and instead sees the development of relevant theory, hypotheses, and concepts as a purpose of the project. The first approach is applied in this study, hence it does not take the extreme position of not taking any prior theorising into account, as is the case for a grounded theory approach, where the researcher approaches a field without any prior knowledge (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). While the ‘*what*’ and ‘*how*’ of interorganisational trust in a judicial context are indeed unknown, prior knowledge about the ‘*what*’ and ‘*how*’ of interorganisational trust in general, and in other contexts, put the investigations on track, specifically the universal trust process by Dietz (2011). However, it was kept in mind that, as stressed by Eisenhardt (1989), although early identification of possible constructs or factors allows them to be explicitly measured in interviews, it is equally important to recognise that the identification of constructs is tentative in theory-building research (Paré & Elam, 1997).

An informed choice about the design of a research project starts with a consideration of the adopted epistemological positions. Although typologies diverge a great deal between different authors, broadly speaking, five epistemologies can be distinguished: positivism, critical realism, pragmatism, interpretivism/constructivism, and postmodernism (Isaeva et al., 2015). In this study, the realist approach will be taken, where the aim is to describe social observable facts in an objective way as natural facts, together with the acceptance that these observations will be biased (Gray, 2014). Influences of positivist research will shine through in terms of how trust is observed, namely as a phenomenon that exists outside of the researcher and can be measured as such. On the other hand, it is recognised that social facts are different from physical facts, but nevertheless researchers should try to be as objective and realistic as they can (Fleetwood, 2005; Isaeva et al., 2015). Importantly, researchers conducting positivist studies see themselves

as impartial observers who can objectively evaluate or predict actions or processes, but who cannot engage in moral judgments or subjective opinion. They are detached from the phenomena of interest (Paré & Elam, 1997). Theories of unobservable social construct will be designed based the individual's meaning of the world based on their life experiences. However, objectiveness in this context stems from constructing theories based on the average meaning that a group of individuals uses. Theories are constructs operationalised by the individual, based on their expectations and interpretations of the behaviour of the other persons in the given situation. The subjective meaning determines if, when, and how people decide to suspend the doubt and trust, "by leap of faith" and convert it to certainty in the subjective environment (Mollering, 2006).

In Table 2 a non-exhaustive list of the different methodological stances encountered during the preparation of the study design is presented. The methodological labels that apply to this study are indicated in bold.

*Table 2 Non-exhaustive list of methodological labels that can be attached to a research project; the labels most appropriate to this research are in bold*

Research purpose	Paradigms/epistemology	Methods	Design
Descriptive	Positivism	Quantitative	<b>Case study</b>
<b>Exploratory</b>	Constructivism	Qualitative	Narrative research
Explanatory	<b>Critical realism</b>	Multi-method	Phenomenology
Mixed	Pragmatism	<b>Mixed-method</b>	Grounded theory
	Postmodernism		Ethnography
Sampling/ Case Selection Techniques	Data collection	Qualitative data analysis	Reasoning
Typical	Open-ended interview	Content analysis	Deductive
Diverse	<b>Semi-structured interview</b>	Narrative analysis	Inductive
Extreme	<b>Survey</b>	Discourse analysis	<b>Cyclical</b>
Deviant	Card sort	Framework analysis	Abductive
Influential	Focus group	Grounded theory	
Most similar	QCA	Congruence analysis	
<b>Most different</b>	Documents	<b>Thematic analysis</b>	
<b>Instrumental</b>	Observations		

## 5.2 Rationale for applying the case study method

From the preliminary investigation it became clear that a qualitative strategy was best appropriate for the largest part of the aims of the study, while a quantitative part could complement the methods, for describing the setting and offering background and triangulation to the qualitative data. Moreover, further development of both methods can offer invaluable information for the progress of the field of trust research. In qualitative research, the inquirer makes knowledge claims based primarily on the multiple meanings of individual experiences,

with an intent of developing a theory or pattern. The researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data, using strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies, or case studies. In contrast a quantitative approach is one in which the researcher “primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge (i.e. cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories), employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistics data” (Creswell, 2013, p. 18).

From the research questions the best suited research method should emerge quite naturally. Yin (2014, pp. 9–15) describes three conditions on which to base the selection of the appropriate research method, which are applied to the current research questions:

- (a) **The type of research questions posed.** The research questions mainly cover ‘what’ and ‘how’ type of questions dealing with operational links between concepts needing to be traced over time rather than looking for frequencies or incidences. This exploratory type of research calls for either case study research or the study of histories.
- (b) **The extent of control required over behavioural events.** When you can manipulate the behaviours of the persons involved in the events one can turn to experiments. When the behaviours cannot be manipulated and there is no access to these behaviours, one should turn to histories. When the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated but can be observed, then the case study is the appropriate method. While trust and information exchange are difficult to manipulate in a judicial context, they can be indirectly observed by probing the relevant actors about their experiences.
- (c) **Focus on contemporary or historical events.** Since the focus lies on contemporary events rather than historical events, the study of histories is not the appropriate method, while the case study method is.

Thus, the ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions, the possibility to indirectly observe the behaviour under study and the focus on a contemporary issue led to the choice of a case study. Case studies are widely used in organisational studies across the social sciences (Hartley, 2004), especially in the field of public administration (Haverland & Yanow, 2012). A case study can be defined as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, pp. 16–17) or as “the intensive (qualitative or quantitative) analysis of a single unit or small number of units (the cases), where the researcher’s goal is to understand a larger class of similar units (a population of cases)” (Seawright & Gerring, 2008, p. 296). From

the latter definition, it can be determined that a case study does not limit itself to describing the phenomenon in one specific context, but should also seek to make inferences to outside the case's context. An exploratory case study, whether based on single or multiple cases, is aimed at defining questions, constructs, propositions or hypotheses to be the object of a subsequent empirical study (Paré & Elam, 1997). Case research is useful when a phenomenon is broad and complex, where the existing body of knowledge is insufficient to permit the posing of causal questions, when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed, and when a phenomenon cannot be studied outside the context in which it occurs (Yin, 2014).

### 5.3 Design of the case study

Following Yin (2014), the next steps after deciding on the global research method of case studies are to identify the case(s) and establish the logic of the case study.

#### 5.3.1 Selection of the case

The judicial system is a large system and cannot be investigated as a whole with an exploratory study. To investigate trust in a judicial context, where the actors are independent from one another, but where there is high interdependency and high risk involved, a specific case should be selected. The number of selected cases was limited to only one case, given the broadness of the cases and the need to make an in-depth exploration rather than a theoretical comparison or broad overview. The selected case should optimally assist in exploring the interorganisational trust phenomenon in a judicial context. The purpose was to select an instrumental case, which should provide a general understanding of the phenomenon under study (Stake, 1995). In a single instrumental case study, the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue (Creswell, 2012). Single-case studies are rather common in trust research, due to the context-dependency of trust and the necessity of building rapport between the researcher and the respondent (Oomsels, 2016) in order to make sure that the respondent is willing to 'open up' and discuss the sensitive issues of trust (Lyon, 2012). Focusing on a particular segment of the judicial system, instead of trying to study a broader collection of the judicial system, was also useful to reduce the heterogeneity of the studied subjects, which allowed for easier discovery of congruent patterns, while increasing the internal validity of the study. The narrow scope avoids causal heterogeneity, increasing the potential for key causal relationships to be found and well specified in the developed theories (Mahoney & Goerts, 2006). To make sure there is a depth of information about interorganisational cooperation and trust, intensity sampling was applied to select the case, a type of purposeful and instrumental sampling (as opposed to random sampling), where the selected case is an information-rich case,

which manifests the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely (Patton, 2015). Further, the case should be clearly confined by boundaries in terms of time, events, and processes (Creswell, 2012).

To make an educated choice it is good to map out the judicial system in Belgium. Within the judicial system, different interorganisational constellations exist, spread across different legal matters and different geographical areas. Figure 15 shows the different types of courts in Belgium and where they are located, all dealing with a specific branch of justice: the constitutional court, supreme courts, appellate courts, courts of first instance, police courts, court for the justices of the peace, administrative supreme court, court of audit, labour courts, labour appellate courts, and commercial courts.



Figure 15 Map of the different types of courts in the Belgian judicial system and their geographical spread. (Source: [www.lexadin.nl/wlg](http://www.lexadin.nl/wlg))

Ultimately, the juvenile justice system was valued the best starting case for gathering insights in the interorganisational trust experiences in a judicial context. The juvenile court is part of the courts of first instance, next to the civil and correctional (criminal law) departments. Within the juvenile justice system there is a particular high interdependency between the organisations

(De Bruyn, 2006), where the different actors depend greatly on cooperation and information sharing from one organisation to the other. More than in other judicial branches, finding the right measure for a minor depends on the most recent state and evolutions of a minor's personality and environment. Measures can be modified when the progress of the minor calls for an adaptation, causing the legal procedure to be a longer process than usual, requiring constant gathering and sharing of information. The decision making process in juvenile cases also requires a personal input from the members of the involved organisations, to seek creative solutions given the various situations of the minors. In other branches, the explanations on the background of the case can be given directly by the adult in a hearing, which is not always the case for minors. This judicial network brings many different actors together, because on top of the regular actors in case processing (judges, lawyers, and litigants), a public prosecutor, the police, and several judicial support services are involved, which form a complex network of interdependencies between the actors. As such, the juvenile justice chain served the purpose of an instrumental case, not because it is a typical case, but because the intensity of the interdependencies is particularly high. The external validity will therefore not lie in the findings being applicable in general to any judicial network, but it can provide more substance on otherwise more subtle interdependencies in other cases. There was also a pragmatic advantage to choosing the juvenile justice chain as the main case to focus on for an exploratory study. It was known that the judicial system could be closed towards outsiders when it comes to sharing internal affairs. Furthermore, the professionals employed in the judicial chain can be severely overburdened by caseloads, meetings, and participation to on-going scientific studies. While the juvenile justice chain also has its reservations towards opening up to an evaluation by an outsider affiliated to a university and suffers from a high workload, they are far less the focus of ongoing research projects than for example the criminal justice system. Therefore, it was expected that gaining access to this case would be less problematic than it would have been for other judicial networks.

Concerning the geographical boundaries of the case, the restriction was made to focus only on the juvenile justice system organised in the Flemish community, to install legal homogeneity of cooperation, and for language and culture similarity between researcher and the context in which the study took place (see Chapter 4). The events that were selected are the cases of minors in alarming situations. As also resulted from the preliminary study, six organisations formed the boundary of the case, introduced in Chapter 3.

Regarding the timeframe, the decision was made to perform a cross-sectional exploration of the context rather than a longitudinal follow-up of the trust development over time, since it this



not concern a network that did not exist prior to the study. Regarding the time boundaries of the case, the study of the information exchange was restricted to the present situation.

In short, a cross-sectional single instrumental case study based on intensity sampling is performed, where the interactions between six organisations of the Flemish youth care chain in dealing with minors in alarming situations is the focus. This first step of case-selection, and the steps that will be described next, are illustrated in Figure 16.

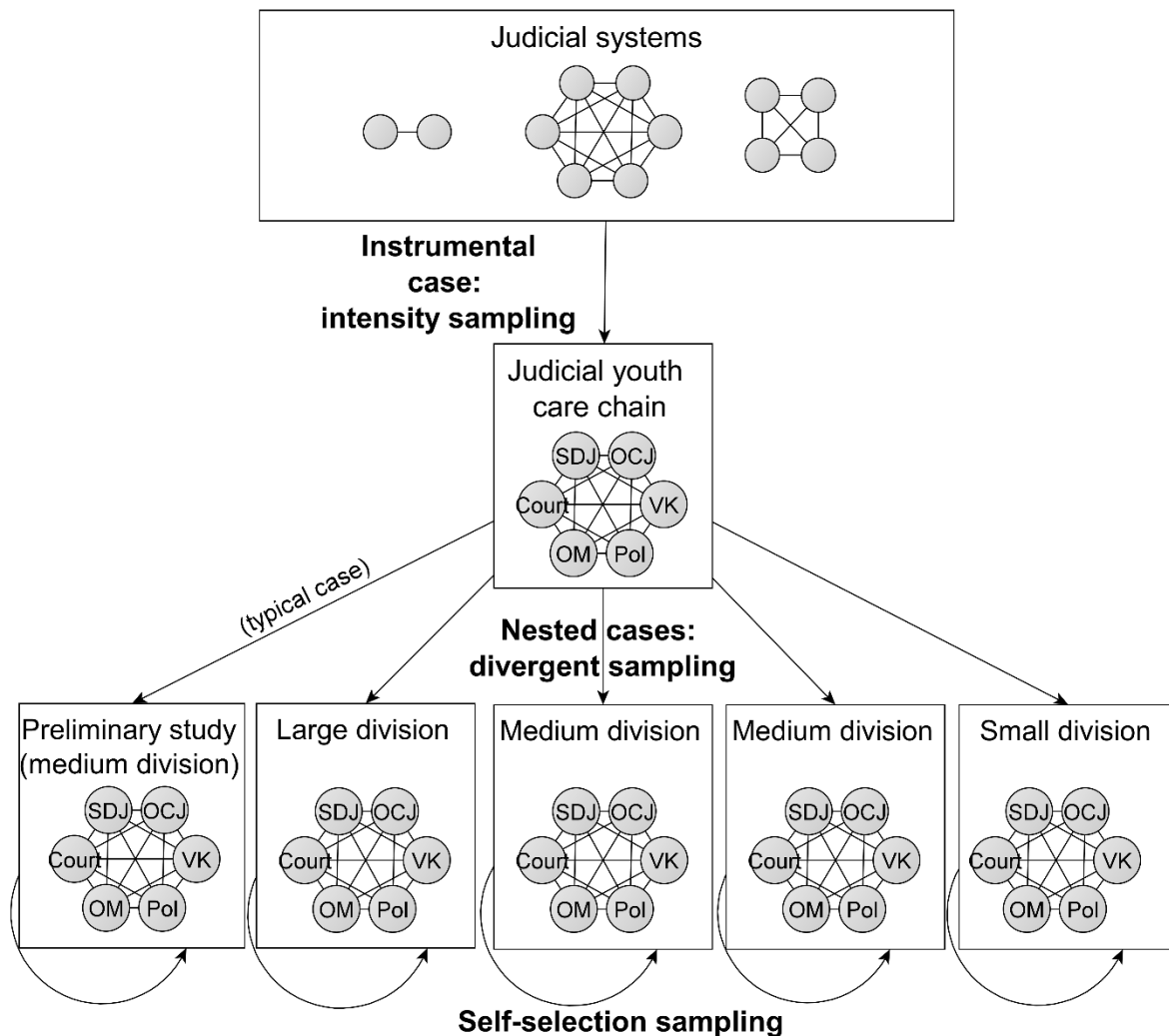


Figure 16 Representation of the case selection and sampling techniques

### 5.3.2 Unit of observation and unit of analysis

In a research design, the unit of observation – the object where the data is gathered from – can be different from the unit of analysis – what is analysed to make conclusions and on what the results apply. Fulmer & Gelfand (2012) have reviewed research articles on interorganisational trust published between 2000 and 2011, and found that trust could be studied at three different levels, and targeted towards three different referents. Based on this they present a multilevel–

multireferent framework that differentiates nine linkages between organisations. The level of observation can be the individual, the team, or the organisation, while the referent can also be an individual, a team, or an organisation. In this research, the level of observation is the individual trustor ( $A_i$ ) and the referent for the quantitative data collection is the trustee organisation (B), and for the qualitative data collection the individual trustee ( $B_i$ ). What is considered the unit of analysis are the interorganisational relationships occurring between the members of the included organisations (Figure 17).

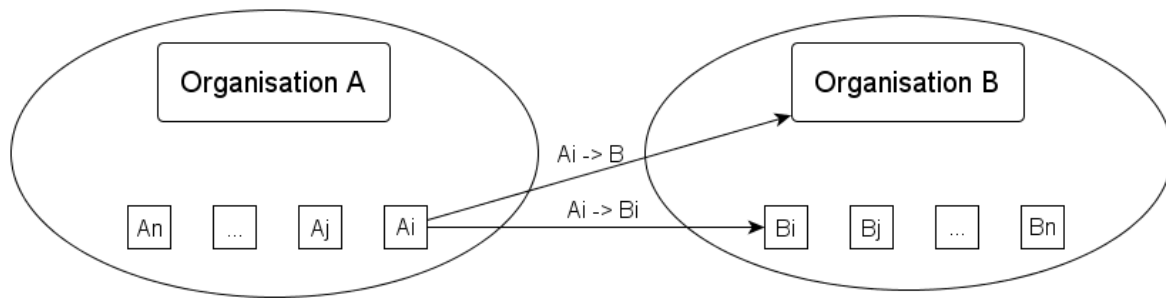


Figure 17 The interorganisational relationships and the interpersonal relationships are the unit of analysis

The interorganisational interactions are operationalised as the interactions between two people of different organisations. Because the included organisations were rather small, and a lot of the contact between the organisations was personal, trust in this setting is mostly a relational characteristic between two individuals. In a study of a network of organisations, there are several interorganisational trusting links. In this study, 30 types of interorganisational trust links ( $A_i \rightarrow B$ ) were encountered, displayed in Table 3.

The analysis will be concentrated on findings that can be generalised to the judicial youth care system. However, when a finding is specific to only one of the above listed interactions, this will be stressed in the reporting. The focus was mainly on the general findings, since these are currently the most valuable given the nature of this thesis, which aims to contribute to a general idea about trust in judicial interorganisational relationships, and even broader to trust in interorganisational information exchange between any kind of organisation. Discussing the particularities of each interorganisational link would be more appropriate for a study with a more practical approach.

Table 3 All existing connections between a member of a trustor organisation with a trustee organisation

Individual		Organisation
Counsellor from a OCJ	with the	VK
Counsellor from a OCJ	"	juvenile police
Counsellor from a OCJ	"	OM
Counsellor from a OCJ	"	juvenile court
Counsellor from a OCJ	"	SDJ
Counsellor from a VK	"	OCJ
Counsellor from a VK	"	juvenile police
Counsellor from a VK	"	OM
Counsellor from a VK	"	juvenile court
Counsellor from a VK	"	SDJ
Juvenile police officer	"	OCJ
Juvenile police officer	"	VK
Juvenile police officer	"	OM
Juvenile police officer	"	juvenile court
Juvenile police officer	"	SDJ
Juvenile public prosecutor	"	OCJ
Juvenile public prosecutor	"	VK
Juvenile public prosecutor	"	juvenile police
Juvenile public prosecutor	"	juvenile court
Juvenile public prosecutor	"	SDJ
Juvenile judge	"	OCJ
Juvenile judge	"	VK
Juvenile judge	"	juvenile police
Juvenile judge	"	OM
Juvenile judge	"	SDJ
Counsellor from the SDJ	"	OCJ
Counsellor from the SDJ	"	VK
Counsellor from the SDJ	"	juvenile police
Counsellor from the SDJ	"	OM
Counsellor from the SDJ	"	juvenile court

### 5.3.3 Mixed-method design

The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2012). The purpose of employing several sources is to get a detailed and holistic view on the particular case. Collecting different types of data by different methods produces a wider scope of coverage and may result in a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study than would have been otherwise achieved (Bonoma, 1985). Construct validity, which is the degree to which a test measures what it claims to measure, can also be addressed using multiple sources of information, because it essentially provide multiple types of evidence of the same phenomenon. The development of converging lines of inquiry in this manner is better known as triangulation. Triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning and verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Stake, 2000). Triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being perceived (Flick, 1998; Paré, 2001).

Moreover, trust is seen as a multidimensional, dynamic, and often tacit and ambiguous concept (Ping Li, 2011) and the richness of the trust research field “constantly reminds us how no single method can provide the perfect understanding of such a multifaceted phenomenon” (Lyon et al., 2015, p. 2). Indeed the complexity of the trust phenomenon calls for an even greater use of research from different epistemological perspectives to generate innovative and practically meaningful results (Isaeva et al., 2015). As Isaeva et al. (2015, p. 13) further mention: “if trust indeed does not just exist but is a social process, its nature can usefully be viewed in many different ways”. Several researchers have recommended that both quantitative and qualitative data be used in any study if at all possible (e.g. Wynekoop, 1992). As stressed by Eisenhardt (1989, p. 538) quantitative data “can keep researchers from being carried away by vivid, but false, impressions in qualitative data, and it can bolster findings when it corroborates those findings from qualitative evidence”. A variety of types of data and methods are acceptable since theories and concepts never offer complete certain knowledge, and are inevitably too simplistic to represent the full richness of the social world (Isaeva et al., 2015).

Given the rather rudimentary state of research methods on trust, the ongoing discussions about these research techniques, and the lack of application of interorganisational trust research in a judicial context, some creativity was required in the development of the data collection methods to answer the research questions. This was accompanied by a certain degree of trial and error. Finally, two methods were employed: in-depth interviews and an organisational network survey (see Figure 18). The purpose of the survey is mainly to get a better insight in the structure of the judicial network and to help interpreting the results from the analysis of the interview transcripts. Moreover, the development of the survey could also offer new tools for future researchers and managers interested in measuring and analysing trust in an organisational context. The interviews, in turn, gave in-depth insights in personal trust experiences in the regular work context of the operational actors. The survey data allows obtaining a measure of the trust and trustworthiness levels at the time of the exploration of the trust process. This is important to contextualise the interview findings and to compare the results from the interview data in a more standardised manner. While the survey allows gathering superficial information about all interorganisational relationships, the interviews provide in-depth information about a small number of the interorganisational relationships. When respondents offer the same general beliefs in either of the methods applied, the chances increase that this is the true expression of their experiences, and are less likely to be due to biases in either of the data-collection methods. A dialectic between results of the two modes of data collection also offers

better insights in both datasets, and allows exploring the same research problem from different angles.

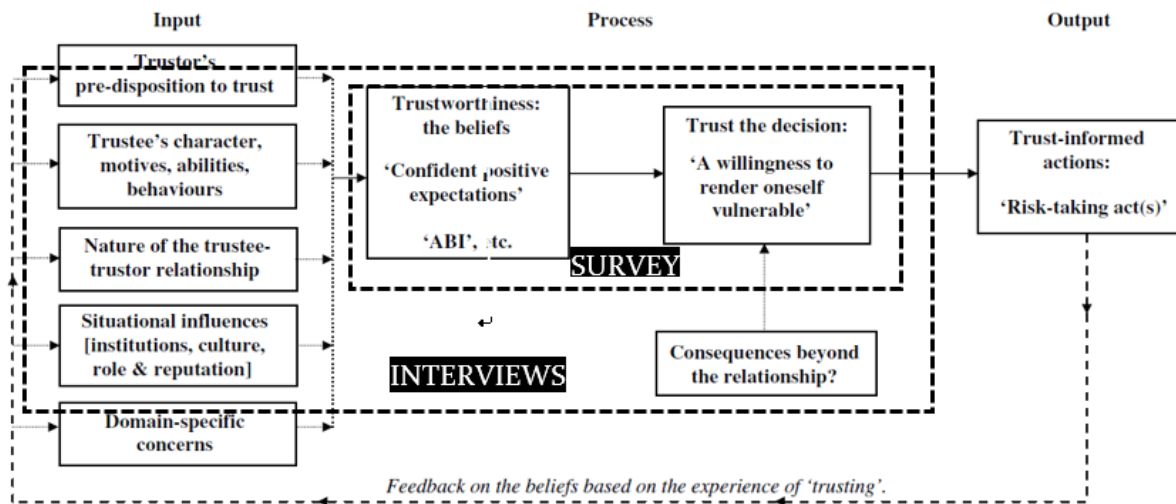


Figure 18 An indication of the parts of the trust process that were investigated by the two different methods (adapted from Dietz (2011, p. 219))

Each method, however, has its own shortcomings, and should be complemented by the other. Interviews can be coloured by social desirability and an overemphasis on the positive experiences. Moreover, respondents are not always aware which factors influence their behaviour, especially if a factor has a more subtle or indirect influence. The single informant bias in research on interorganisational relations (Kumar et al., 1993; Zaheer et al., 1998), where a relational experience is only viewed from one side, was avoided by including the stories of both parties in a dyadic relationship. Surveys, on the other hand, have the problem of having to measure broad and abstract notions on a unidimensional scale, which inevitably produces error, but they can show links between concepts that were not admitted by the respondents or not realised by the respondents. Questionnaire items are often developed after the researcher has analysed a series of interviews, observations, and documents. This strategy reflects a fundamental difference between mixed-method case studies and single methods (e.g., survey, laboratory experiment, field studies). In the former, the researcher may have less a priori knowledge of what the variables of interest will be and how they will be measured (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Whereas findings from qualitative research tend to be more stable than findings from quantitative research when one moves from a superset to particular subsets, quantitative findings tend to be more stable than qualitative findings when one moves from a subset to a superset (Mahoney & Goerts, 2006). Quantitative scholars often view the cases they analyse

simply as a sample of a potentially larger universe. The narrower scope adopted in qualitative analysis grows out of the conviction that causal heterogeneity is the norm for large populations (e.g. Ragin, 1987, 2000). As such, combining both approaches offers an advantage to the internal and external validity of the study.

The fact that different types of data were collected from the same sources, namely the same respondents, is a limitation. Collecting the survey data from other respondents than the interviewees, could have given measurements that are more independent. However, to assure cooperation with the survey it was deemed necessary to administer the survey after the interviews, when there was already a relationship between the researches and the respondent.

#### 5.4 Data collection and analysis

The mixed-method approach in this study means the application of two different methods of data collection to answer the research questions. The two methods are in-depth interviewing and the collection of survey data in the form of an organisational network study. The data collection of both methods happened at the same time, where the network survey was administered after the interview took place. Both data collection processes are discussed in detail in this section.

##### 5.4.1 In-depth interviewing

The process of collecting and analysing the interview data for this study can roughly be divided into two consecutive phases. The first phase was the preliminary phase, which was less focused in terms of the research topic. It was designed to enable a demarcation of the research topic, a delineation of the boundaries of the case, and an exploration of the most appropriate study design. The insights gathered from the preliminary study were discussed in Chapter 4, since these significantly determined the choices made in the further phases of the research, and offer therefore important argumentations for the successive research design. The scope was broadened to include all organisations linked to the judicial decision making process in judicial youth care cases, and restricted to only those interactions involving information exchange on individual cases, and only in the Flemish community. Distrust and intra-organisational trust were discarded from the focus, while interpersonal trust was included. The universal trust model of Graham Dietz (Dietz, 2011) became the conceptual framework guiding the further exploration. The research questions were narrowed down according to the theoretical and practical findings. The second phase existed of more focussed interviewing and was determined by the information of the first phase. However, the second phase could also be divided into different phases, because inherent to qualitative research is that the data gathering and analysis

is a cyclical and iterative process where the approach is continuously adapted based on findings from earlier stages in the process.

In both the preliminary and main interviewing phases, the selection of the embedded cases and respondents, and the interviewing procedure were similar. Therefore, they are discussed together in the section below.

#### 5.4.1.1 *Selection of the embedded/nested cases: Divergent sampling*

In Flanders (Belgium), there is one judicial youth care chain per geographical judicial division, in the sense that each division has one juvenile public prosecutor's office and one juvenile court. These usually cooperate with one VK, OCJ, and SDJ<sup>62</sup>, while there are several juvenile police departments for these divisions, one per police zone, corresponding to one or more municipalities. The police departments and social services included in the case were those located closest to the courthouse, for practical considerations. For the **preliminary phase**, different functionaries of the judicial youth care chain from one division of a judicial district<sup>63</sup> were interviewed (first only the court and OM as described in Chapter 4, later expanded with the new founded demarcation of the case). The judicial youth care chain in one judicial division is treated as an embedded or nested case of the population of judicial youth care chains. The restriction to the Flemish community resulted in a population of thirteen such embedded cases to choose from, namely the thirteen divisions of the five judicial districts in Flanders (see Figure 19). The division for the preliminary study was not chosen randomly from the population of the thirteen Flemish divisions. The case had to be a typical one, not an extreme case, since this would be most instrumental for a first exploration (Seawright & Gerring, 2008), and would be most representative for the judicial youth care system. Since little to no prior knowledge was available on how trust was perceived in this case, and which factors could have an important influence on the experiences of the trust process, a medium sized division was chosen.

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<sup>62</sup> There are a few exceptions where two OCJ's are in contact with one OM.

<sup>63</sup> In Dutch: Afdeling van een gerechtelijk arrondissement.

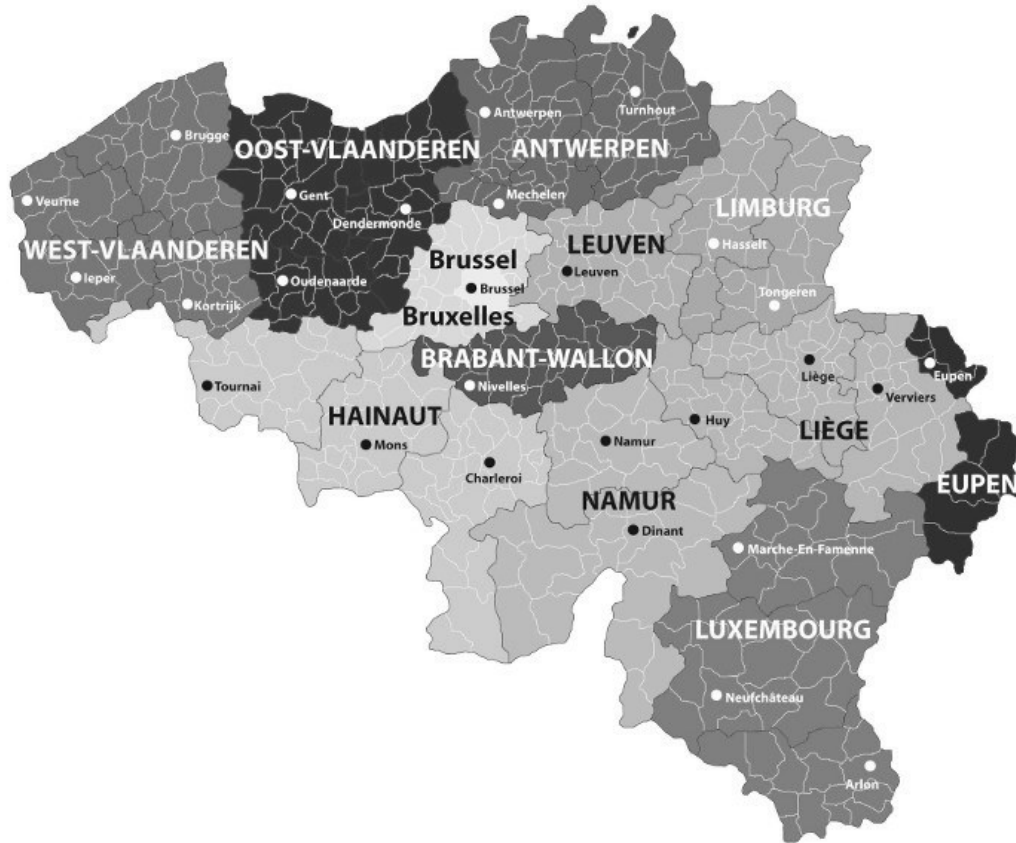


Figure 19 The 12 judicial districts in Belgium (shades) with their respective 27 divisions (dots); of which 13 under Flemish decree (excluding bilingual Brussels). (source: <http://justitie.belgium.be>)

The selection of the embedded cases for the **main phase** of the interviewing happened in several steps. From the 13 divisions in Flanders, excluding the case exhausted at the preliminary phase, 12 divisions were left to select from. These were partitioned into large, medium, and small divisions according to the available information. The yearly amount of youth care cases concerning alarming situations entering the OM per division was taken into account, retrieved from the statistical department of the general prosecutors' office. The average was taken over the course of 5 years (2011-2015), to make sure the influence of outlier years was cancelled out. The number of juvenile judges was also taken into account, since this gives an indication of the size of the division, and of how many different contacts will have to be maintained within the network. These numbers were obtained from the HR-department for court staff. Unfortunately, no counts of the number of public prosecutors or number of counsellors at the social services per division could be obtained from their respective administrative departments, however, it is expected this will be in line with the number of judges, and correlated with the caseload of the division. It was also taken into account that the divisions differed based on which judicial district they were part of, insofar this was possible. The characteristics of the judicial divisions are listed in Table 4. The identification of the divisions is withheld in the description of the



methodology, because anonymity was granted to the respondents to diminish the possibility of social desirable answers, given the sensitive nature of the interviews and to ensure the willingness to partake in the study. There is also little added value in revealing which divisions were included in the study. Therefore, only ranges of the figures are offered in Table 4 instead of the exact number of judges and cases to prevent identification of the divisions.

The objective was maximum variation sampling, also called divergent sampling, where one seeks to obtain the broadest range of information and perspectives on the subject of study. Guba & Lincoln (1989) state that this is the preferred strategy for qualitative inquiry. By looking for this broad range of perspectives, investigators are purposefully challenging their own preconceived (and developing) understanding of the phenomenon under study (Paré & Elam, 1997). From the categorisation, four embedded cases that were most different from each other were chosen, to be able to make a comparison based on the different aspects of the cases. In total, five out of the thirteen Flemish judicial youth care chains were included in the study, one for the preliminary interviews, and four for the main interviews. An advantage of contacting respondents within the same division is that it provides a deeper and more holistic understanding of the embedded case, improving the internal validity of the study. Experiences from one organisation in the division case could be juxtaposed against the experience from the counter organisation, offering two sides of the same experience. One limitation of not including all embedded cases is that external validity of the findings to the whole of the judicial youth care system will be lessened. However, five out of thirteen cases, which also varied maximally, should cover many of the possible experiences within this system.

*Table 4 Characteristics of the sampled embedded cases (Source: HR department of the judicial personnel & databank of the College of Prosecutors-general – statistical analysts)*

	Pilot division (Medium)	Smaller division	Medium division	Medium division	Larger division
# Judges	2 to 3	0 to 1	2 to 3	2 to 3	4 to 8
Judicial district	A	B	C	D	C
Yearly # VOS cases incoming at OM (5y average)	1500-3500	0-1500	1500-3500	1500-3500	3500-7500
Yearly # of cases incoming at OM (VOS+MOF) (5y average)	3000-6000	0-3000	3000-6000	3000-6000	6000-13000

#### 5.4.1.2 *Recruitment of the respondents*

Due to the closed nature of the judicial system, obtaining access for research purposes posed some challenges. The advantage of selecting respondents from only five distinct judicial divisions, instead of randomly choosing respondents from all divisions, was that access to the case only needed to be obtained for the selected divisions, not for all divisions, resulting in a time advantage.

In total 67 interviews were administered with respondents from six different organisations in the judicial youth care chain (OCJ, VK, juvenile police, OM, juvenile court, and SDJ). Eight interviews can be counted as part of the preliminary study, and 59 are part of the main study. Four respondents taking part in the preliminary study were so kind as to participate again in the main study to be interviewed on the newly defined aspects, which means they participated in two interviews. This brings the total number of unique interviewees at 63 individuals. Two judges came from a non-sampled (small) division since the president of the Court of First Instance of that district forwarded the invitation letter also to this division. Instead of not accepting because this diverged from the sampling setup, they were gladly accepted as a welcome addition to the diversity of the dataset.

For each division invitation letters or e-mails were sent containing the research plan and an indication of the envisioned type of respondents. This was directed to the president of the Court of First Instance, the Crown Public Prosecutor, the administrator-general of the youth welfare agency of the Flemish government, the central address of the selected VK's, and the chief commissioner of the selected police departments. Contact was repeated until a reply on the willingness to participate was achieved. One contacted police department chose not to participate to the study due to a preoccupation with internal challenges of the organisation. This department was not replaced with another because already sufficient interviews could be obtained from the other organisations. After permission for the study was granted, appointments were made with the available respondents for a face-to-face interview. The contacted superiors could decide which members of their organisations would participate to the study with a minimum of two respondents per department, where possible. The result is a stratified self-selection sample, where the strata are the organisations, within which the members could choose to participate. In practice, most respondents likely volunteered to participate. This voluntary participation could lead to self-selection bias, where individuals who consent to be involved in interviews may be different to those who do not, in ways that are not related to sampling criteria (Costigan & Cox, 2001; Robinson, 2014). In interviews, extensive intimate self-disclosure is sometimes required and this is likely to lead to a sample containing

individuals who are more open, more patient, and more interested in the topic than the general population. The self-selection bias cannot be circumvented in interview-based research, as voluntary participation is central to ethical good practice. Therefore, all a researcher can do is be aware of the possibility for bias and consider its possible impact on findings and generalisability (Robinson, 2014). However, due to the relatively small size of the organisations, the participating respondents covered a large part of the total number of staff. Therefore, the effect of self-selection on the internal validity of the findings should remain small.

Table 5 presents the distribution of the individual respondents in terms of division, organisation, and gender. A more detailed overview of the respondents and their identification code used in the results chapters, their background characteristics, and the interview length can be found in Appendix A. To reach saturation the aim was to gather at least 12 interviews per division and per organisation (Guest et al., 2006). While this did not appear to be feasible, a minimum of 6 interviews per division and per organisation was reached which should be sufficient to have at least the basic elements for metathemes to emerge (Guest et al., 2006). Viewing the judicial youth care case as a whole, the 67 interviews definitely sufficed to reach saturation on the themes.

*Table 5 Interviewee frequencies divided by division, organisation, and gender based on the 63 unique interviewees (excluding the repeated interviews). \* = The unintentional non-sampled division*

	Police			OCJ			VK			OM			Court			SDJ			Total		
Division	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	1	1	2	.	2	2	1	1	2	2	5	7	.	3	3	1	1	2	5	13	<b>18</b>
2	.	1	1	.	1	1	.	2	2	1	2	3	.	1	1	1	1	2	2	8	<b>10</b>
3	.	1	1	.	1	1	.	2	2	.	1	1	.	1	1	2	2	4	2	8	<b>10</b>
4	.	2	2	1	1	2	.	2	2	.	2	2	.	2	2	2	.	2	3	9	<b>12</b>
5	.	.	.	.	2	2	.	2	2	1	3	4	2	.	2	1	.	1	4	7	<b>11</b>
6*	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	2	<b>2</b>
Total	1	5	6	1	7	<b>8</b>	1	9	<b>10</b>	4	13	<b>17</b>	2	9	<b>11</b>	7	4	<b>11</b>	16	47	<b>63</b>

#### 5.4.1.3 Interviewing procedure

In-depth semi-structured interviews were administered, in which a general structure was set up about the main questions to be asked on each of the topics. The detailed structure was established during the interview, depending on the input of the interviewee (Drever, 1995). Since interpersonal trust is a directed sentiment towards another person, there are two directed trust assessments in one interpersonal connection. Two connected persons act simultaneously

as a trustor and as a trustee, and trust of person A in person B does not necessarily equal trust of B in A (e.g. Golbeck & Hendler, 2006). The respondents were queried about their experiences as a trustor, not as trustee. Although each interview differed from the other because each interview was adapted to insights from previous interviews and input of the individual respondent during the interview, the lead questions always covered the perceived trustworthiness within the most intense interaction, the trust levels within these interactions, the factors the respondents believed influenced the trust relations within their professional context, and the positive or negative consequences of trust in this context. Two respondents insisted to be interviewed together for a reduction of their time, and one preferred to do a telephone interview. Two respondents preferred not to be recorded, but detailed notes were collected during and after these two interviews.

About a week prior to the interview, the respondents received an overview of the topics that would be discussed. This offered three clear advantages. First, the interview covered quite difficult questions about non-straightforward topics, which demanded a high effort from the respondents. Indeed, they often showed signs of mental fatigue when nearing the end of the interview. By knowing beforehand what the interview would encompass, the respondents were better prepared for the effort. Second, it offered the respondents a chance to think about the topics of trust and information sharing in their everyday work the week before the interview, increasing the chance of receiving substantial data on their personal experiences. Third, many respondents spontaneously asked whether they could receive the questions before the interview, so offering this possibly eased their prior concerns about the interview, starting the interview off with a more comfortable interviewee. This can also be considered a fundamental aspect of the informed consent process (Gill et al., 2008). This practice could also bring about some disadvantages, such as priming the respondent and offering them time to come up with the most acceptable answer, but this did not outweigh the advantages.

#### 5.4.1.4 *Data analysis*

The 67 interviews were good for almost 76 hours (75 hours and 45 minutes) of voice recordings to analyse, with an average duration of an interview of 1 hour and 11 minutes. The interviews were analysed using **thematic analysis**. Since each interview has a different emphasis guided by the interviewee's input and earlier insights, the interview data was not deemed fit for quantitative forms of analysis, such as content analysis. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to find recurring themes within the data. This can be inductive or deductive, depending on whether or not theory is applied to the process. In this case, theory was early on part of the research process, and initialised a deductive approach of analysis. The concepts from the

universal trust process as depicted by Dietz (2011) guided the initial coding scheme, where inputs, ability, benevolence, integrity, trust, and outcomes were used as sensitizing concepts. Since these concepts are still broad and abstract, and require a context specific interpretation and completion, the analysis was complemented with an inductive phase where more themes for each initial concept emerged from the data.

Prior to analysis, the characteristics of the thematic analysis are clarified, based on recommendations by Braun & Clarke (2006). As said, the analysis is **iterative**, initially theory driven, but also partly inductive. The goal of the analysis is to give a **rich description** of the entire data set, rather than a detailed account of one particular aspect. Since the area of research is under-researched, it was deemed valuable to give a broad overview of the predominant patterns of the trust process in this particular context, before specific aspects could be investigated in a deeper sense. This initial broad description should inspire further research on the topic, going deeper into the important themes that were detected. The interviews were analysed applying the **semantic approach**, where themes are found exclusively within the explicit or surface meanings of the data. It was not the purpose to look for anything beyond what a respondent said. This latter approach is the latent approach, where the analysis searches for underlying ideas, assumptions, conceptualisations, and ideologies. The semantic approach follows from the realist epistemological view, where a largely unidirectional relationship is assumed between meaning and experiences, and language (Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1995). As such, everything the respondents said is viewed as objective accounts of reality, of how the trust process actually takes place in their context. This is not to say that many of the expressed views will not be coloured by personal experiences and intrinsic motivations to respond in that manner, and that they are only subjective accounts of the true situation, however, they will be handled in that manner. The triangulation with survey data should partly account for this subjectivity bias, however, the results will need to be interpreted as a replication of subjective experiences rather than objective realities.

For the execution of the data analysis, the step-by-step guide by Braun & Clarke (2006) was followed. The six phases of Braun & Clarke (2006) are: (1) familiarising yourself with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. **Phase one** – familiarising with the data – started with the administration of the interviews. Certain interviews were assisted by students (around 40% of the interviews), however, even then the researcher was present at the interviews whenever possible. The recordings, originally in Dutch, were transcribed verbatim and the transcriptions were analysed using the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software

NVivo (version 11). The transcribing of the interviews was done verbatim by the researcher, with the exception of the interviews where a student had assisted. The process of transcription, although time-consuming, proved to be an extremely useful way of familiarising with the data, and allowing for a primary analysis in an active, lengthy, and gradual way, allowing ideas to simmer over time. I firmly agree with other researchers such as Bird (2005, p. 227) that transcription should be seen as “a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology”. It also helped discover the weaknesses in the interviewing techniques, which could be improved in later interviews to get the most out of each subsequent interview. During the interviews and the transcription process, the analysis of the data already started in the form of jotting down initial ideas in a notebook. For those interviews transcribed by a student, more time was spent familiarising with the data, including checking back the transcripts against the original audio recordings. This phase was pivotal but challenging since the ultimate data corpus was quite extensive due to the inclusion of different regional cases and different perspectives from different organisations.

In **phase two** – generating initial codes – a tree structure was used. The coding scheme is used to organise segments of similar or related text for ease in interpretation and to search for confirming/disconfirming evidence of these interpretations (Paré & Elam, 1997). The concepts from the universal trust process of Dietz (2011) were used as parent-codes (upper level of the tree), and the contextual newly emerging codes as child-codes (lower level of the tree), alternating between deduction and induction. Dietz acknowledges that only the sequence of the trust process will be equal for all trust encounters, but the content of the separate steps will be unique according to the specific context in which the trust judgements take place (Dietz, 2011). Newly found codes were further explored through relevant scholarly literature during the data collection and data analysis process to further sensitize the researcher to what may be found in the research setting (Blaikie, 2009). Through this iterative process of coding, recurring themes emerged. If theory-inspired concepts do not work in the field realities, alternations to the conceptual framework were possible, to work with the concepts that respondents use (as for example applied in Zirakzadeh, 2009). For example, where ability was a parent node, the child nodes (also called sibling-codes) were complete information, correct information, timely information, and communication skills. A child node can in turn serve as a parent node for new child nodes. Data analysis already started during the data collection since overlapping data analysis with data collection not only gives the researcher a head start in analysis but also, more importantly, allows researchers to take advantage of flexible data collection. Indeed, a key

feature of theory-building case research is the freedom to make adjustments during the data collection process (Paré & Elam, 1997).

For **phase three** – the searching for themes – codes were inspected to gather around common themes. Since the universal trust process already guided the themes, especially child nodes were grouped together. The codes were organised into theme-piles. There are different levels of themes, including main overarching themes and sub-themes. Main overarching themes were in this case already deducted from the literature, namely the universal trust process, and sub-themes were induced from the exploratory data analysis by the inductive coding process. Several codes applied only to a small amount of substantial interview transcripts. These were evaluated and either removed from the set or recoded into another existing node when applicable. Mind mapping was used to organise the remaining initial codes to overarching themes.

For **phase four** – reviewing themes – certain codes were dismissed and others were merged. In **phase five**, the resulting codes were defined and named in a logical and coherent manner. Attention was also paid to preserve excerpts contradicting other coding themes. **Phase six** – writing the report – resulted in the next three results chapters, where the complex reality of the mind map is presented in a way that should make it easy to grasp, and where sufficient evidence of the arguments will be given in the form of interview excerpts. The final coding scheme and mind maps can be found in Appendix B & C. This should help to facilitate replication of a given study and allow the reader to see the logical link between the theoretical model and the codes (Paré & Elam, 1997).

#### 5.4.2 Interorganisational survey

A survey was designed to measure certain variables of the universal trust model, in a judicial interorganisational setting. The piloting of the quantitative research design spanned a longer period than that of the qualitative design because it is less flexible and needs to be identically administered with all respondents to allow for valid comparisons. As such, no adaptations can be done once the final format was decided on.

##### 5.4.2.1 *Survey development*

Three versions of a network survey were developed, two of which were adapted after piloting. The first attempt was administered to 3 respondents at the end of their interviews. The respondents were asked to list all their contact persons from the other organisations, to list the content of the interaction with each of these persons, and to order these interactions according to the level of trust in this interaction. In theory this would have made it possible to map out a detailed network of the judicial youth care chain, however, it became clear this would be a

tedious endeavour, and getting cooperation from the complete network would be difficult. One respondent would easily have 20 contacts with the other organisations that made answering questions on each of the contacts a long and repetitive process. Asking questions on a personal level, with the need for addressing the other members by name, caused some restraints to discuss negative sides of the interaction. A follow-up question showed that the respondents found the survey difficult and did not fully understand the point of the questions.

Based on this, another survey was developed that focussed on the organisational level and included a more diverse set of questions related to the trust process. Given the realisation from the preliminary study that trust in the judicial context is a case of both trust on an interpersonal level and trust on an organisational level, this methodology was a compromise to have at least a part of the process successfully measured. The modified version was administered to 11 respondent after their interviews. The survey included 20 questions on a broad range of topics that could be related to trust: the mode, frequency, and reasons of contact, interdependency, coordination, conflict resolution, value congruence, communication, transparency, ability, benevolence, integrity, predictability, work pressure, importance of trust, and willingness to share mandatory, optional, and prohibited information. These questions were asked for each of the five counter organisations, which totalled the amount of questions to answer to a maximum of 100. Although the survey in this format was better than the previous one, it still contained some serious issues. There were too many questions and the validity of the constructs was uncertain since they were only covered by one item. Individual measures of attitudes tend to be inaccurate because they only extract particular aspects of the general attitudes to measure, or because people's answers to single-attitude questions are plagued by random inaccuracies (Norwegian Social Science Data Services, 2010).

Improvements were made by focussing on only a few topics, and including scales for each topic. The final survey was included at the end of the last 35 interviews (respondent #33 to #67). The survey included questions only on the ability, benevolence, and integrity, and on trust in information providing and receiving, for interorganisational relations, but not interpersonal ones. It included only nine questions about each partner organisation, which now totalled to a maximum of 40 questions when a respondent had contact with all five partner organisations in the chain.

The limitation of the number of questions to only nine was important for two reasons. First, the same question was asked for each organisation the respondent interacts with, a maximum of five organisations. Therefore, each question has to be filled in a maximum of five times, which



brings the maximum total of questions to 40. Granted, filling in the same question five times, only changing the object of the question will not require the same time or mental effort as filling in five completely different questions, meaning 40 questions remains certainly manageable. The second reason was that the survey was administered after an interview of, on average, more than one hour. Therefore, the survey presented an additional burden, and to ensure the full attention of the respondent, the survey had to be limited. The restriction to nine questions also meant a thorough evaluation of each question, to make sure the most is acquired from the survey. Unfortunately, the survey questions could not differentiate between the three different types of information known from the preliminary study (mandatory, optional, and prohibited), since this would have caused an increase of 20 additional questions to the survey (six questions instead of two, asked for each of the five counter organisations).

The approach of surveying only those interviewed, with a shorter version and with questions not on individuals but on organisations, was a compromise. The advantage of this approach is that the response rate of all those incorporated in the sample will be high. A disadvantage is that the sample is not randomly chosen from the population of possible respondents, but is chosen according to the selection strategies applied for the interviewing process, as described earlier. Another disadvantage is that there is only outreach to a smaller sample, given that only measurements from the interviewees can be received. From the preliminary exploration, it was clear that it was difficult for respondents to answer items about trust without having the possibility to nuance their answers.

#### 5.4.2.2 *Survey format*

The nine questions incorporated in the survey were scored on a 5-point Likert-scale from completely agree to completely disagree. To counter the inaccuracy of measuring concepts with only one item, two indicators were used for each construct (ability, benevolence, integrity, and trust) and the values of these indicator variables were combined into scales. The six survey questions on trustworthiness (ABI) were inspired by the items used by Mayer & Davis (1999). Since the focus is on a particular kind of trust, namely the willingness to exchange information, new measurement items had to be constructed. The items of the survey are listed in Table 6, and the exact (translated) format of the survey, allowing repeated answers for each question for the different organisations, can be found in Appendix C. The items represent a subjective measure of the opinions of the trustors, not an objective measure of the intentions and behaviours of the trustee organisation, which is most valuable since the perception of the trustee will influence the trustor's behaviour.

*Table 6 The items included in the interorganisational survey*

Contact (filter)	<i>With which of the following organisations do you exchange information on cases of alarming situations?</i>
Ability	<i>The following organisation does the best they can to execute their tasks in alarming situations.</i> <i>The following organisation possesses sufficient capacity and knowledge to execute these tasks.</i>
Benevolence	<i>The following organisation is generally willing to help me when needed.</i> <i>The following organisation does not hinder me in my task execution.</i>
Integrity	<i>The following organisation has a strong will to bring each case to a successful conclusion.</i> <i>Sound principles guide the other organisations behaviour.</i>
Trust in information exchange	<i>I easily share case information with the following organisation.</i> <i>I easily accept case information of the following organisation.</i>

As with the interviews, the survey data could be biased due to selection bias, where people with more trusting personalities may be more likely to return the survey (Currall & Judge, 1995). However, only one respondent did not return the survey after deciding to fill it out privately after the interview.

#### 5.4.2.3 Data structure

The data was entered manually into a database from the completed paper surveys, where one respondent was entered on a data line, together with their responses to the questions. The data had to be transposed from a horizontal structure to a vertical structure so that the unit in a row was no longer the individual respondent, but became the relationship between the respondent and a particular organisation. An example of what this transformation looks like is displayed in Table 7 & Table 8 where the data of the first two respondents is presented on the first ability item in the survey. These respondents are from the police, which is why the ability of the own organisation is not measured, and receives a value of 7, which is labelled in the dataset as the value for 'own organisation'. For the OCJ and the SDJ, this respondent neither agreed, nor disagreed with the statement, and for the OM, they agreed. For the VK and the court, this question was not applicable (=value 6) for this respondent since they had no contact with these organisations when dealing with alarming situations.

*Table 7 Example of the horizontal data structure before transposition*

ID	Ability_1_Pol	Ability_1_OCJ	Ability_1_VK	Ability_1_OM	Ability_1_Court	Ability_1_SDJ
AG	7	3	6	4	6	3
AH	7	4	3	4	4	4

After transposition, the data has a multilevel structure, meaning that several data points are linked to the same higher unit. In our example, the first six values are obtained from the same respondent, namely AG. This was taken into account when analysing the data.

*Table 8 Example of the vertical data structure after transposition*

ID	Trustee organisation	Ability
AG	Pol	7
AG	OCJ	3
AG	VK	6
AG	OM	4
AG	Court	6
AG	SDJ	3
AH	Pol	7
AH	OCJ	4
AH	VK	3
AH	OM	4
AH	Court	4
AH	SDJ	4

#### 5.4.2.4 Data analysis

The trustworthiness items were transformed into scales by taking their average value. This is also called a mean score, which is a linear combination of different variables, where each item counts equally for the calculation of the score. Such summated scales can cover a wider range of manifestations of the relevant attitudes than single-attitude measures do, and positive random measurement errors can be offset by negative ones and vice versa. Furthermore, they have more values than their individual components and their values often have a distribution that is better adapted to linear regression analysis than single-attitude measurements are (Norwegian Social Science Data Services, 2010). In most cases, it is advised to work with means

scores instead of sum-scores, because these scale scores have the same range as the original measurements, which eases the interpretation of the values, and the comparability between the scales.

Only univariate and bivariate analyses will be used throughout this study. The analyses are done with IBM SPSS statistics 24. The multilevel structure of the data made the analysis less straightforward than is usually the case. The clustering of the data needed to be taken into account because answers of one individual are expected to correlate more than the answers between individuals. In the results chapters, the specifics on the data analysis method will be explained in further detail, because the applied method depends on the variables involved, and whether they are treated as nominal, ordinal, or metric variables.

## 5.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the methodology applied in this study was described in detail. First, the use of the iterative approach was explained, where deductive and inductive approaches are both used, building new insights on top of what is already known from prior research. Then the use of the case study method is advocated, stating the reasons why this is the most appropriate method. The design of the case study was described, with the selection of the judicial youth care chain as an instrumental case, the use of embedded maximally divergent cases from within this case, and the self-selection sampling of respondents within the strata (organisations) of these embedded cases. The advantages of a mixed-method approach for this study are given, with a detailed description of the two applied methods: in-depth interviewing and an organisational survey. In total 67 interviews were administered, and the last 34 of these interviews ended with an administration of a survey. The interviews were analysed using thematic coding where the concepts of the universal trust model served as sensitising concepts, and new codes were generated that gave more concrete content to these abstract notions. The surveys were univariately analysed for descriptive purposes and bivariately using correlation analysis, taking into account the multilevel structure of the data, and applying the relevant test depending on the structure of the variables involved in the binary analysis. In the next chapter, the first results are presented, answering the first and second research questions

## Chapter 6 Perceived trustworthiness

In this chapter, which starts a series of three separate chapters presenting the results of the study, perceived trustworthiness is the central concept that is focussed on, before the causes and consequences of these perceptions are explored. Recapitulating the universal trust model (see Figure 20), trustworthiness is conceptualised in this study as the belief the trustor has about the trustee's ability, benevolence, and integrity (ABI). Someone is perceived as trustworthy when the trustor holds confident positive expectations about the trustee's intentions and behaviour regarding these three dimensions. The findings provided in this chapter offer insights into how organisations in the judicial youth care chain are perceived in terms of trustworthiness, and what qualities make a member of these organisations to be perceived as trustworthy, covering research questions 1 and 2. In addition, mechanisms have been identified through which trustworthiness is perceived in a more or less positive way. The findings in this chapter are the result of descriptive analysis of the survey data and in-depth analysis of the experiences and perspectives of the members of the judicial youth care chain provided in the interviews.

The units of analysis are the relationship between an individual trustor ( $A_i$ )<sup>64</sup>, member of trustor organisation (A) with an individual trustee ( $B_i$ ), member of the trustee organisation (B); and the relationship between an individual trustor ( $A_i$ ) and the trustee organisation (B). The reason for the levels not being similar is due to the different levels of a relationship that could be measured with the different data collection methods involved (see Chapter 4). The difference between the two methods is, however, an interesting finding, and can inform future researchers attempting a mixed-method approach to be wary of the fact that people talk easier about interpersonal relations than about interorganisational relations when interpersonal relations are present. For this exploratory study, it was decided not to limit the conversations to interorganisational experiences ( $A_i \rightarrow B$ ) but to allow the respondent to elaborate on their interpersonal experiences ( $A_i \rightarrow B_i$ ) when this got the respondent talking in a deeper sense about the trust process.

In this study, six organisations act as a trustor and trustee in relationship to five counter-organisations, resulting in 30 distinct directed interorganisational trustor-trustee relationships

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<sup>64</sup> The following notation is used: A = organisation of the trustor; B = organisation of the trustee;  $A_i$  = an individual trustor;  $B_i$  = an individual trustee. A member of an organisation is at the same time a trustor and a trustee, however, in this study they are only observed as trustors about their beliefs of the trustees ( $A_i \rightarrow B_i$ ) and not the other way around ( $B_i \rightarrow A_i$ ).

(A → B). Each of these relationships has its own specificities due to the different characteristics of the trustor and trustee organisations. The aim of the study, however, is not to perform a comparative analysis between each of the 30 different relationships, which would render the findings too scattered, but rather to find common patterns shared between all relationships within this network of the judicial youth care. Especially for the analysis of the qualitative data, the differentiation between all types of relationships would be difficult given that not all five interorganisational relationships one organisation has could be discussed with the same level of detail, and generally, only two of the deepest relationships were discussed. However, when certain (sets of) relationships stand out in terms of perceived trustworthiness these will be highlighted throughout the presentation of the findings.

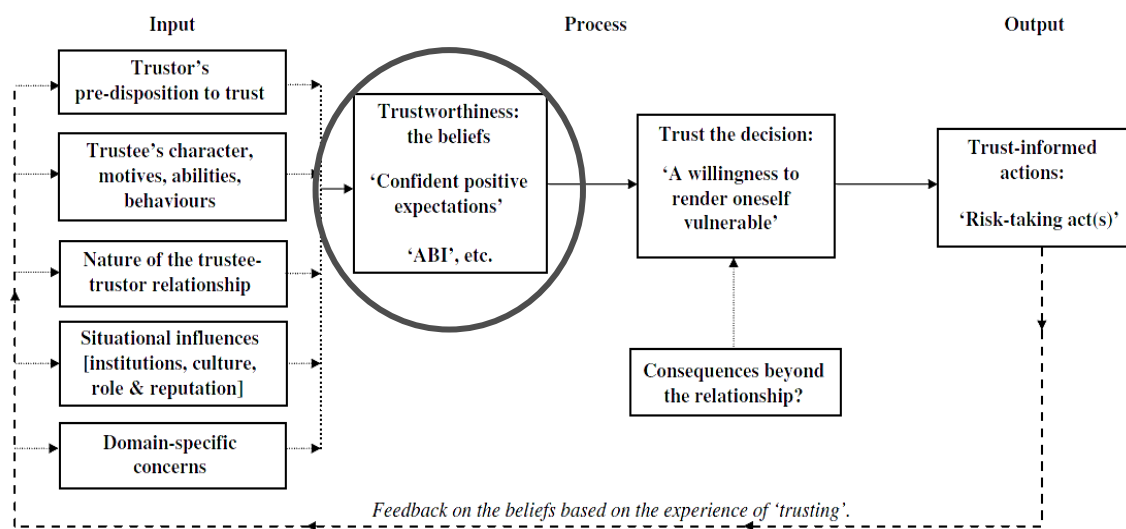


Figure 20 The universal trust process (Dietz, 2011, p. 219), indicating what part is explored in this chapter

First, the results of the survey are presented to offer a description of the trustworthiness perceptions in the different interorganisational relationships that existed at the time of the exploration. Second, this is done for each of the three dimensions (ABI) separately. Next, these descriptive statistics are substantiated with the interview data, deepening the understanding of the qualities that are especially valued in this context concerning trustworthiness. Based on the interviews, a new conceptual model is proposed about the mechanisms that lead to positive assessments of the trustworthiness, termed the trustworthiness gap model. Variations in the perceptions of trustworthiness are explained by different gaps that are present between the beliefs of the trustor and the beliefs and behaviours of the trustee.

## 6.1 The general and directed perceptions of trustworthiness

In this first section, the perception of the trustworthiness is evaluated across and between the organisations. The results of the survey data on the perception of the trustworthiness are

presented based on 154 data points gathered from 34 respondents belonging to the six organisations in the judicial youth care chain. Each respondent was asked the same six trustworthiness items five times; once for each of the five partner organisations in the chain. As such, the responses refer to the trust process experienced by an individual member  $A_i$  of the trustor organisation A in the whole of trustee organisation B (i.e.  $A_i \rightarrow B$ ). Questions on the interpersonal level ( $A_i \rightarrow B_i$ ) were not feasible with the survey (see section 4.4.1). An item remained unanswered when a particular relation between two organisations was non-existing, in which case the item became irrelevant. This resulted in 154 valid measures for perceived trustworthiness. Of the six items measuring the perception of the trustworthiness of the organisations, two items covered ability, two benevolence, and two integrity (see section 5.4.2.2). A new scale variable 'perceived trustworthiness' was computed on the basis of these items, by taking the mean score of all the six items. Values of the trustworthiness scale can take any real number ranging from one to five, and the scale is treated as a continuous variable. What follows is a description of the sample statistics, without trying to extrapolate these findings to the population. This is a choice made especially because breaking down the numbers between the organisations results in a low number of measurements per cell, which make them less fit for inferential statistics.

Univariate descriptive analysis of the perceived trustworthiness scale shows that in general there is a positive perception of the trustworthiness in the interorganisational relationships. The grand mean on the trustworthiness scale is 4,07, with a standard deviation of 0,62. This average score is above the midpoint of the scale (3) and the standard deviation is small, indicating an average positive perception of trustworthiness with small individual variation. A histogram of the perceptions displayed in Figure 21 illustrates that indeed the values are predominantly situated near the positive end of the scale. Only two out of the 154 trustworthiness perceptions are below three, which is in the lower half of the scale. Based on these findings it can be assumed that the perceptions of the trustworthiness are positive within the interorganisational relationships of the judicial youth care chain. Although these results could be biased due to social desirability, at least four counter indications point out that the perceptions are truly positive. First, if the respondents answered more positive than is truly the case, it is likely that even after a correction for this effect the true values do not lie at the complete opposite end of the scale. Second, the lack of outliers suggests that this general positive trend is truly present, because not all respondents are equally influenced by social desirability, which would lead to at least some values to be at the negative side of the scale when truly negative perceptions were present. Third, the positive expectations are confirmed by the interviews, as discussed further.

Fourth, during the interviews another possibility was observed, where social desirability bias possibly worked in the opposite direction. Respondents tried to tone down their positive perceptions of each other to make sure they did not give the impression of being uncritical of one another, in that case the real picture might be even more positive.

The empirical finding of extremely positive perceptions within this case is interesting and unexpected given the high-risk environment of the operating organisations. However, it also means that only fluctuations within the positive end of the scale can be examined, and not fluctuations between positive and negative perceptions of an organisation<sup>65</sup>. On the other hand, as further explained, for the perception of the trustworthiness in interpersonal rather than interorganisational relations, as was discussed during the interviews, more differentiation was found in how the counterparts were perceived, with positive and negative examples from the respondents.

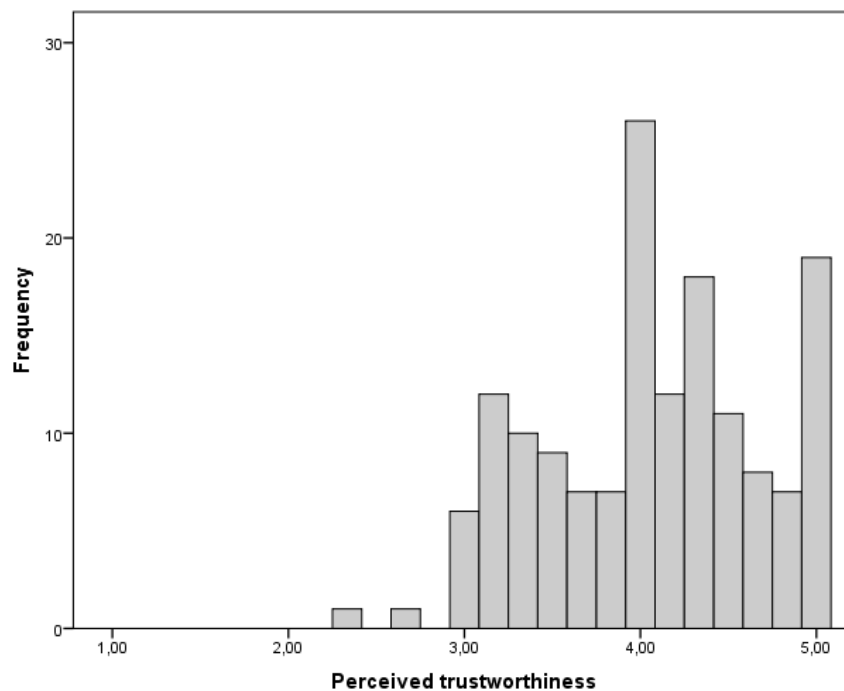


Figure 21 Histogram of the perceived trustworthiness scale ( $n = 154$ ; mean = 4,07;  $SD = 0,62$ )

Examining the means separately for the 30 distinct trustor-trustee relationships ( $=\text{mean}(A_i \text{ to } A_n) \rightarrow B$ ) offers a clear picture on how the respondents perceive the trustworthiness. These directed means are presented in Table 9, together with the standard deviation for each mean

<sup>65</sup> It is important to remind the reader that the exploratory case-study design of this study results in in-depth descriptions of what the respondents experience within this case. The fact that there is almost no untrustworthiness perceived merely means that this study cannot give deeper insights on that aspect of these judicial interactions because they did not exist. The lack of variation in the perception of trustworthiness towards organisations does not pose any problem for this study, as might have been the case in comparative or confirmatory research.



score as a measure of the variation of the numbers, and the number of individual measurements used for the calculation of said mean score. First, looking at the marginal cells of the crosstab, the column-means displayed in the last row represent the mean score a trustee organisation B receives from the individual trustors they interact with in the judicial youth care chain. Although all organisations receive a mean score above the midpoint of the scale ( $>3$ ) the VK, police, and OCJ scored, in ascending order, below average ( $<4,07$ ), while the OM, SDJ, and court scored, in ascending order, above average ( $>4,07$ ).

*Table 9 Directed mean trustworthiness scores and their variance; N= number of measures available to calculate the mean*

Trustor organisation	Trustee organisation													
	Police		OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N
Police	.	.	3,94 (,42)	3	3,33 (.)	1	3,94 (,42)	3	4,17 (,24)	2	3,94 (,42)	3	3,93 (,38)	12
OCJ	3,43 (,73)	5	.	.	3,27 (,35)	5	4,03 (,70)	5	4,17 (1,18)	2	4,17 (,63)	5	3,77 (,72)	22
VK	3,61 (,59)	6	4,14 (,64)	6	.	.	4,36 (,40)	6	4,06 (,67)	4	4,08 (,52)	6	4,05 (,58)	28
OM	4,35 (,47)	9	3,96 (,72)	9	3,94 (,71)	9	.	.	4,43 (,48)	9	4,22 (,52)	9	4,18 (,60)	45
Court	4,13 (,22)	5	3,83 (,61)	4	3,54 (,60)	4	4,62 (,36)	7	.	.	4,64 (,46)	7	4,26 (,59)	27
SDJ	3,38 (,63)	4	4,25 (,52)	4	4,08 (,17)	4	3,71 (,91)	4	4,46 (,42)	4	.	.	3,98 (,65)	20
All	3,87 (,65)	29	4,03 (,60)	26	3,72 (,60)	23	4,21 (,61)	25	4,31 (,53)	21	4,26 (,54)	30	4,07 (,62)	154

The row-means displayed in the last column of the table represent the scores given by all members of one particular trustor organisation A to all other trustee organisations in the chain. It reveals how the members of one particular organisation generally value their counterpart organisations. On average, the members of the OCJ have the least positive perception about their counterparts, followed by the SDJ, and the police scoring below average. The VK, OM, and court score above average, in ascending order. Comparing the column-means and the row-means for each organisation shows that the police, the OM, and the court are perceived quite

similarly to how they perceive others (e.g. the police receives a mean score of 3,87 as a trustee, and give a mean score of 3,93 as a trustor). The OCJ and SDJ perceive the trustworthiness of their counterparts worse than they are perceived themselves, and the VK perceives others better than they are perceived.

Finally, the inner cells of the crosstab display details about how the members of a specific trustor organisation ( $A_i$  to  $A_n$ ) rate a specific trustee organisation B. The court's trustworthiness is perceived above (or close to) average by all organisations, the SDJ only has a below average score from the police, while the OM is perceived lower by the police, OCJ, and SDJ. The mandated facilities (OCJ and VK) are well perceived by the SDJ, but not by the others. Between themselves there is a difference between how the VK perceives the OCJ (4,14) and how the OCJ perceives the VK (3,27). The police are perceived less than average trustworthy by all except the OM and the court. What is noticeable from these results is that the perception of the trustworthiness might be hampered by the context of the organisations (e.g. police (security) vs. OCJ (care)) but that certain organisations are also valued less trustworthy despite their shared background (e.g. OCJ vs. VK). What is also apparent is that the organisations with the longest history and well-established foundations in the judicial youth care chain, namely the OM, the court, and the SDJ, are seen as the most trustworthy partners. Meanwhile, the police, the VK, and the OCJ - the three organisations with the lowest perceived trustworthiness - are the organisations that are less well established within the chain. The police are not included in the decree on integrated youth care while the VK and OCJ are newly founded by this decree and are only operational since 2014. These (inter)organisational characteristics could play a role in the variations in the perception of the trustworthiness and are further explored in the next chapter, where the inputs are discussed in more detail.

The visual boxplot representation of the differences in perceptions in Figure 22 shows again where the differences in perceptions lie between the trustor and trustee organisations. The median score<sup>66</sup> given by a member of the OCJ is clearly lower, while the median score given to the VK is the least positive. The court has both the highest median perception of others (as trustor), and receives the highest median perception by the others (as trustee), followed closely by the OM, the second best on both accounts.

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<sup>66</sup> This differs slightly from the mean scores in the table, since the median represents the middle value of the scale where 50 percent of the sample scores fall below, and 50 percent fall above, and is less influenced by outliers. In contrast, the mean takes the average of all values and is more influenced by the distribution of the values.

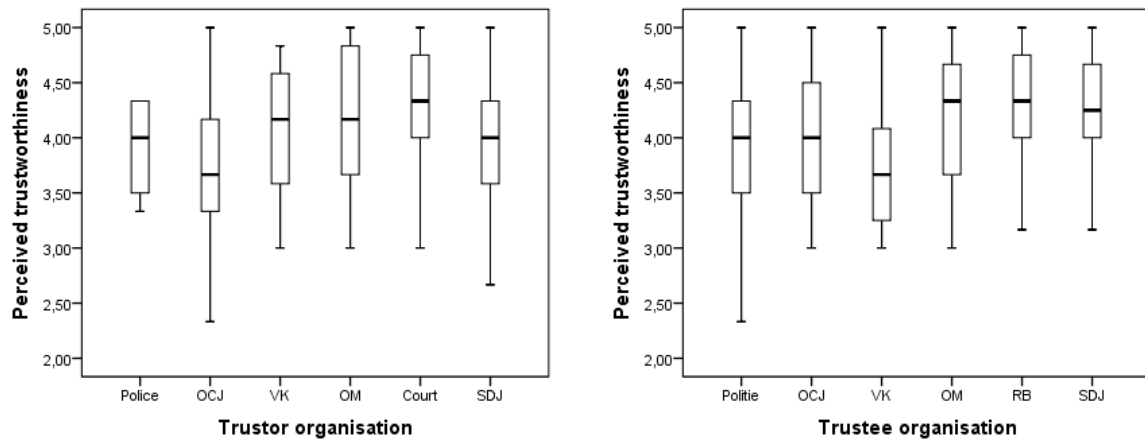


Figure 22 Boxplots of the distributions of the perceived trustworthiness. Left = Perceptions by trustor organisation A; Right = Perceptions about trustee organisation B

The above presentations are useful descriptive statistics about the sample; however, inferential statistics can also be applied to estimate the size and significance of these organisation differences in the population. With 154 data-points, the continuous trustworthiness scale and the trustor or trustee organisation as nominal variable, an ANOVA-test would be fit to test whether the mean trustworthiness scores differ significantly between the organisations. This test (see Table 10) shows that there is no significant difference between how the different organisations perceive their counterparts (the row-means from Table 9), but that there is at least a significant difference between how two trustee organisations are perceived (the column-means from Table 9).

Table 10 Trustworthiness ANOVA results comparing mean trustworthiness between different trustor organisations and trustee organisations

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F-statistic	Significance
Trustor organisation	3,992	5	,798	2,167	,061
Trustee organisation	6,768	5	1,354	3,872	,003

However, since our observations are not independent (different trustworthiness perceptions stem from the same respondent  $A_i$  but target a different trustee organisation  $B$ ), analytical techniques that take possible clustering into account need to be applied. If this clustering in the data is neglected, the standard errors of the estimates can be biased (usually underestimated), rendering significance tests invalid (Julian, 2001). The hierarchical structure of our data consists of 154 perceptions of trustworthiness from 34 respondents. First, to check if there is significant clustering in the data, a null-model with perceived trustworthiness as dependent variable (and

no independent variables entered in the model), and a random intercept is performed. Table 11 with the results of the test shows that there is indeed significant intra-class correlation<sup>67</sup> of 0,377, meaning that around 38% of the variation of the perceived trustworthiness scores can be explained by the correlation of the observations within respondents. Therefore, an analytical method taking this clustering into account is indeed required.

*Table 11 Variations on level 1 and 2 of the mixed-model ANOVA null-model with trustworthiness as dependent variable*

	Estimate	Standard error	Sig.
Between observation variation	,241	,031	,000
Between respondent variation	,146	,050	,004
Intra-class correlation (ICC)	,377		

Therefore, a mixed-model ANOVA is performed to check if there is a significant difference in the perceived trustworthiness of the different trustee organisations. What this test does is statistically test whether the differences between the column-means in the last row of Table 9 are significantly different from each other, taking into account the clustering of the responses. The mixed-model adds to a regular ANOVA an intercept that is allowed to vary for each respondent, called a random intercept. The required assumptions of normality of the dependent variable and homogeneity of variance for each combination of the groups of factors are satisfied (see Appendix E).

Next, ‘*trustor* organisation’ is added as a fixed<sup>68</sup> term to the model. This fixed term was not significant ( $p > 0,05$ ), meaning that the members of all six organisations perceive the trustworthiness of the counterpart organisation equally (see Table 12). In other words, it cannot be concluded that the differences in row-means in Table 9 are not due to chance.

<sup>67</sup> Intra-class correlation = between respondent variation / (between respondent variation + between observation variation).

<sup>68</sup> Meaning only one parameter is estimated for this effect without being randomly estimated as was the case for the intercept.

*Table 12 Results of the mixed ANOVA for trustworthiness as dependent variable and trustor organisation as group factor*

	Numerator df	Denominator df	F	Sig.
Intercept	1	28,723	2384,829	,000
Trustor organisation	5	28,541	1,052	,407

If instead ‘trustee organisation’ is added as a fixed term to the model, the results show that there are indeed differences in the scores between the different trustee organisations (see Table 13).

*Table 13 Results of the mixed ANOVA for trustworthiness as dependent variable and trustee organisation as group factor*

	Numerator df	Denominator df	F	Sig.
Intercept	1	33,298	2807,531	,000
Trustee organisation	5	119,041	6,993	,000

To check which scores between organisations differ significantly from one another a post-hoc test needs to be performed. The test, using Šidák correction<sup>69</sup> for multiple comparisons, reveals that with 95% certainty in general, the police scores significantly lower on the trustworthiness scale compared to the OM, the court, and the SDJ and the same holds true for the VK (see Table 14). As such, six out of 15 pairs of organisations are significantly different perceived in terms of their trustworthiness. Between the other nine pairs, the differences are not significant. The perception of trustworthiness of the organisations in the beginning of the chain (police and VK) is significantly less positive than for those at the end of it (OM, court, and SDJ). The lack of significant differences between the other pairs of organisations provide another argument not to further analyse all 30 trustor-trustee couples separately in the interview data to detect why they might vary, but rather look for patterns among groups of organisations with similar characteristics.

<sup>69</sup> The Šidák correction, or Dunn–Šidák correction, is a method used to counteract the problem of multiple comparisons. The significance level is corrected using  $\alpha_{\text{new}} = 1 - (1 - \alpha_0)^{1/k}$  (Šidák, 1967).

Table 14 Pairwise Comparisons of mean trustworthiness scores of the trustee organisations

\* The mean difference is significant at the ,05 level.

Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Šidák

	OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ	
	Mean difference (SD)		Mean difference (SD)		Mean difference (SD)		Mean difference (SD)		Mean difference (SD)	
Police	-,132	(,121)	,153	(,124)	-,390*	(,123)	-,429*	(,129)	-,382*	(,116)
OCJ	.		,285	(,129)	-,258	(,127)	-,297	(,131)	-,250	(,120)
VK	.		.		-,544*	(,132)	-,582*	(,136)	-,535*	(,125)
OM	.		.		.		-,039	(,136)	,008	(,121)
Court	.		.		.		.		,047	(,129)
SDJ	.		.		.		.		.	

In the next section, trustworthiness is disentangled into its three different dimensions: ability, benevolence, and integrity. These concepts were each covered by two unique items in the survey, and served as sensitising concepts during the analysis of the interviews. In each subsection, a dimension is examined based on the quantitative data to learn how well each organisation is perceived on the different dimensions in the sample. This is complemented by an examination of the interview data to explain better the levels of perception, and to discover what the members of the judicial youth care chain understand by someone who is valued as trustworthy. This offers insight in what an actor is expected to act like in order to be perceived as trustworthy in this context. In the interviews, the question is not asked about whether or not the *exchanged information* is trustworthy, but whether the *individual* or *organisation* exchanging the information acts in a trustworthy manner. The difference is that the information can be unreliable (for example because the client did not reveal important details on their situation) but the trustworthiness of the information handler is not necessarily compromised, as long as they did not contribute to the unreliability of the information.

#### 6.1.1 Perceptions of the ability

Ability refers in the literature to “that group of skills, competencies, and characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain” (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 717). Ability can be determined by the competence of those involved in an organisation but also by the environment of the organisation that supports or inhibits the ability of its members. The ability scale is computed similarly to the trustworthiness scale by calculating the mean score of the two

survey items covering ability<sup>70</sup>. The grand mean ability score coincides with the average trustworthiness score, with a value of 4,07. There is slightly more variation between the scores of the respondents, with a standard deviation of 0,74. From the column-means of the perceived abilities of the organisations in Table 15, representing how able trustee organisation B is perceived on average, it is clear that the police and the VK score below the mean ability score, while the OCJ, SDJ, OM, and court score above average, ascendingly. From the row-means, representing how able the members of trustor organisation A perceive their counterpart organisations, it becomes clear that the OCJ, SDJ, and VK have a lower perception of the ability of their counterparts than the average perception, while the impressions that the OM and court have of their counterparts' are above average. Separating the overall measures between the 30 distinct trustor-trustee relationships displayed in the remaining cells of Table 15, the lowest ability score is given to the police by the VK (3,00) and the highest score is given to the OM by the court (4,57). The police only received scores above average from judicial actors in the chain, and the VK only from the OM, which could indicate an effect of the distance between the organisations in the chain or of the paradigms of the organisations (care vs. safety).

*Table 15 Directed mean ability scores and their variance; N= number of measures available to calculate the mean*

Trustor organisation	Trustee organisation													
	Police		OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N
Police	.	.	4,00 (1,00)	3	3,50 (.)	1	4,00 (1,00)	3	4,50 (,71)	2	4,00 (1,00)	3	4,04 (,81)	12
OCJ	3,40 (,65)	5	.	.	3,20 (,45)	5	4,20 (,76)	5	4,25 (1,06)	2	4,40 (,65)	5	3,84 (,79)	22
VK	3,00 (,89)	6	4,17 (,75)	6	.	.	4,42 (,58)	6	4,00 (,71)	4	4,08 (,66)	6	3,93 (,85)	28
OM	4,28 (,71)	9	4,11 (,65)	9	4,11 (,74)	9	.	.	4,33 (,66)	9	4,11 (,70)	9	4,19 (,67)	45
Court	4,20 (,45)	5	4,38 (,75)	4	3,75 (,65)	4	4,57 (,53)	7	.	.	4,57 (,45)	7	4,35 (,59)	27
SDJ	3,38 (,75)	4	4,00 (,71)	4	3,88 (,25)	4	3,75 (,87)	4	4,50 (,58)	4	.	.	3,90 (,70)	20
All	3,72 (,85)	29	4,13 (,69)	26	3,78 (,65)	23	4,26 (,71)	25	4,31 (,64)	21	4,25 (,65)	30	4,07 (,74)	154

<sup>70</sup> Item 1: The following organisation does the best they can to execute their tasks; Item 2: The following organisation possesses sufficient capacity and knowledge to execute their tasks.

To check whether the differences in our sample between the different trustor organisations or between the different trustee organisations hold true in inferential estimation for the population, a mixed-ANOVA could again be applied. However, the assumption of normal distribution of the ability scale for each group of the factor is not met rendering inferential analysis less convincing (see Appendix E). Therefore, these tests are not performed, however, the above sample descriptives should offer sufficient indication of the levels of perceived ability in the judicial youth care chain.

With these numbers in mind, the interview parts explicitly dealing with the aspect of perceived ability were examined to understand how the ability is perceived, which abilities are important in this context, and which abilities are present or lacking. As mentioned, during the interviews the respondents generally described experiences that referred to interactions with specific members of the counter organisations ( $A_i \rightarrow B_i$ ) and less to interactions with the organisations as a whole ( $A_i \rightarrow B$ ), because members of the different organisations get to know one another on a personal level. Therefore, where the survey questions deliberately asked about the aspects of interorganisational trust, the interviews might refer to both aspects of interorganisational trust and interpersonal trust. These two aspects of a trustor's experience are not necessarily the same, since an organisation as a trustee might evoke a different trust process than when the trustee is an individual. However, it is reasonable to expect that the trustworthiness of the members of an organisation will be reflected in the perception of the organisation, and vice versa.

The qualities that are put forward by the respondents for the ability to be perceived positively are **delivering information that is correct, complete, and shared in a timely and efficient manner**, and **possessing good communication skills**. However, the abilities concerning the information sharing applies mostly to the police and the three social services (OCJ, VK, SDJ), not coincidentally the main information providers in this network. Meanwhile, the communication capabilities are most important for the OM and the court, the main decision makers in this network.

Looking at the different qualities more into detail, first, **providing complete and correct information** requires that the delivered reports give a comprehensive and undistorted view of the situation of the minor. The ability to accomplish this task is estimated higher for the police than for the three social services (OCJ, VK, and SDJ). The judicial actors claim that the police have a broader perspective in a case because they combine a care perspective with a safety perspective, since the police have the additional ability to do unannounced visits to families,



while the social services can only do announced visits. Announced visits allow the client-system to adjust temporarily their environment, which can give an incomplete or distorted picture of the true situation. The police can also perform additional background checks within the police information system, while the counsellors depend solely on what the clients choose to disclose about their background. Indeed, as seen earlier, even though the police scored overall below average on the ability scale, they were judged more positively by the judicial actors. The following quote of a juvenile public prosecutor illustrates this point strikingly:

*The police combines the best of two worlds. I don't want to turn them into saints, but they do have both, and when they make a report you notice this perspective. If the client is misleading them, they see through it. [...] And this makes me appreciate the report of a police assistant more sometimes than the report of someone with less experience on this. (AX)*

Specifically for the VK, it was said that their approach is not ideal for gathering complete information, because, as one respondent said, “they do much less home visits than the OCJ, so more things are discussed in a conversation room, and inevitably there is a distortion between what people say and what they really do” (AE). This could explain the lower ability scores the VK received from the others in the survey.

**Timely and efficient information exchange** entails finishing reports within the legal time frame, and establishing a smooth transferral of the reports. The final decision-makers in the judicial youth care chain – the OM and the court – complain that they do not always receive the reports on the latest status of the child’s situation from the SDJ before a hearing. At times they only receive the information at the hearing itself or there is no report at all, which obstructs a thorough preparation of the hearing. This statement from a counsellor from the SDJ illustrates the need for timely information sharing for trust to exist, next to just ‘getting along’:

*What encourages trust is the manner of contact, the amount of contact, the content, whether timely or not. Probably whether you ‘click’ with the person on a personal level. But I think much depends on whether documents arrive on time or whether people perform their jobs in a timely manner. (Q)*

The inability to exchange information timely and efficiently is mostly ascribed to a lack in ability of the counter organisation as a whole, but also on the ability of the individual members within the organisation preparing the report, as the following criminologist at the OM formulated:

*You do notice that some counsellors take much more time to do an investigation of the societal need for care than others. [...] You will always have a personal preference for certain counsellors that are more efficient, or who are more on board with our way of thinking than others. (AM)*

*When too much work flows in, people can't cope with it anymore. Then I don't have distrust towards them because it's due to the external conditions. It's not the fault of the people you need to work with, but due to the conditions. [...] Those people are not the cause of that, it's the organisation. (G)*

Regarding the efficiency, it is felt that certain organisations, mostly the judicial ones, are not up to date with modern ways of communication, and that this hampers a smooth information exchange between the organisations, slowing down the process. This juvenile judge realises they might be perceived as less able due to the limitations set by the organisation:

*The courts still work with a fax machine, and most institutions complain because they don't use that anymore since a long time. And yes, everything needs to be signed, but in the meantime there are so many ways to secure that. So that is very annoying. It is from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and should be removed. (BN)*

While the former qualities applied mainly to the social services and the police, since they collect information on the minor and the situation of the minor, what is most appreciated from the judicial actors, the ones making the main decisions about the situation of the minor and the applied measures, is the **ability to communicate in an open and correct manner**. It is important that the motivations behind the decisions are provided, especially when a decision goes against what the information provider had expected. Proper communication allows for a deepening of the case, and exhibits professionalism on the side of the decision-maker. As a counsellor of the SDJ clearly puts it: “for me it is very important that a judge can communicate and that the communication is nuanced”. This particular counsellor also made the comparison with the functioning of former judges, and continued: “People need this but it is not always easy with the current judge. The first judge I worked with had this, and this meant he could explore things in depth with us” (BJ).

#### 6.1.2 Perceptions of the benevolence

Benevolence can be defined as “the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive” (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 718). In our case, this

could mean that one organisation is willing to help another organisation when this is required. Also the benevolence scale is computed similarly to the trustworthiness scale by calculating the mean score of the two survey items covering ability<sup>71</sup>. The overall benevolence score of 4,06 is close to the grand mean trustworthiness score, and to the ability score. However, when looking more into detail into the different relational scores, there are some differences to be found in how the scores are distributed. Looking at the split average scores per trustee organisation in the columns-means, the quantitative findings show that contrary to the ability picture, the police score higher, namely close to the sample average, while the OCJ now scores below average. The VK has the lowest score, while OM, SDJ, and the court reach again above average, in ascending order. From the row-means in the last column, it is noticed that this time OCJ and police are the least positive in their perceptions of the others respectively, SDJ falls close to the sample mean, while VK, OM, and court perceive the others' benevolence as most positive, in ascending order. The average within the different trustor-trustee relationships is shown in the remaining cells of Table 16. For the first and the only time in the trustworthiness data the court scores below four on the mean scale, namely in the perception of their benevolence by the VK. Mainly the OCJ and the VK take a hit in benevolence compared to their perceived abilities, receiving lower scores from the judicial actors (police, OM, and court).

*Table 16 Directed mean benevolence scores and their variance; N= number of measures available to calculate the mean*

Trustor organisation	Trustee organisation													
	Police		OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N
Police	.	.	3,83 (,29)	3	3,00 (.)	1	4,00 (,00)	3	4,00 (,00)	2	3,83 (,29)	3	3,83 (,33)	12
OCJ	3,60 (,74)	5	.	.	3,20 (,67)	5	4,10 (,82)	5	4,25 (1,06)	2	3,90 (,74)	5	3,75 (,78)	22
VK	4,17 (,93)	6	4,25 (,76)	6	.	.	4,17 (,26)	6	3,83 (,29)	3	4,08 (,38)	6	4,13 (,58)	27
OM	4,44 (,68)	9	3,78 (,97)	9	3,78 (,94)	9	.	.	4,44 (,68)	9	4,28 (,71)	9	4,14 (,83)	45
Court	4,20 (,27)	5	3,38 (,75)	4	3,38 (,75)	4	4,64 (,48)	7	.	.	4,71 (,49)	7	4,20 (,76)	27
SDJ	3,38 (,63)	4	4,50 (,41)	4	4,25 (,29)	4	3,63 (1,11)	4	4,38 (,48)	4	.	.	4,03 (,73)	20
All	4,05 (,76)	29	3,94 (,80)	26	3,63 (,80)	23	4,18 (,68)	25	4,28 (,60)	20	4,23 (,63)	30	4,06 (,74)	153

<sup>71</sup> Item 1: The following organisation is generally willing to help me when needed; Item 2: The following organisation does not hinder me in my task execution.

Keeping the above in mind, the excerpts about the other's benevolence during the interviews can be examined. The qualitative data makes it clear that to be perceived as benevolent in the context of the judicial youth care chain means **showing a willingness to cooperate** with the other party, even when this cooperation is not mandatory, **flexibility**, and to make an effort **not to complicate the work of the trustor, or to facilitate it**.

An example of **willingness to cooperate** beyond the mandatory tasks is the police agreeing to assist the SDJ on a visit when the safety of the counsellor cannot be assured. One counsellor knew that strictly speaking the police could decline this request from the counsellors, at least when they ask them directly:

*I don't think [police assistance] is an obligation and it rather depends on their benevolence. That's my impression, or my experience. It's nowhere written on paper what we can expect from each other. As a matter of fact they always told me or taught me that you shouldn't even contact the police directly, and everything has to go via the public prosecutor. (AF)*

A negative example of benevolence is the perceived rigid and **inflexible** attitude of the mandated facilities towards the others, or perceived unwillingness to share information when asked to do so. This could explain why they scored lower on the benevolence scale compared to their abilities. This was expressed by one of the counsellors of the SDJ explaining why they had only little contact with the VK: "They already don't share much information with us anyhow. [...] So then we won't take any contact either" (BJ). This attitude can be explained by the fact that the mandated facilities take their professional confidentiality very seriously, which pleads for their trustworthiness towards their clients. However, different stakeholders can have a different expectation, which means they will each evaluate certain behaviours in a different way.

Positive examples of **facilitating the other's work** are taking into account each other's schedules, consulting each other before drastic measures are advised or imposed onto a client, and notifying each other when a referral of an acute case is on the way. A negative example of one organisation complicating the other's work is the mandated facilities transferring escalating cases at the end of the week, on Friday afternoon. This causes distress among the successive organisations who are, at that time, not in the best position to find a solution for a child, given that many care-services do not have permanent opening hours during the weekend. Therefore, the successive organisations perceive this action as the mandated facilities evading their

responsibilities, and passing on the problem to the judicial system, since escalating cases do not suddenly arise on Friday afternoon, and could be either reported earlier, or are not that acute that they cannot be handled by the voluntary care over the weekend. Despite countless complaints about this issue, this problem does not get resolved, and affects the perceived benevolence of the mandated facilities:

*At times, when the VK or OCJ make a very late referral, or refers a case but then obstructs us, or the classical, on Friday afternoon. When you are on duty on Friday between 2 and 4 pm, keep your breath. Because then the VK's will do urgent referrals, for example, a child that has to go to the mother or father over the weekend while they find this is unsafe for the moment. And when you ask 'since when are you working on it?', it turns out already from Monday. [...] This late reporting is an old issue between us. (AI)*

### 6.1.3 Perceptions of the integrity

Integrity involves “the trustor’s perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable” (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 719). The integrity scale is computed similarly to the previous scales by calculating the mean score of the two survey items covering ability<sup>72</sup>. The survey results show a similar picture for integrity as for the overall trustworthiness scale (see Table 17). The police and VK receive below average judgement on their integrity, as was the case with the ability, followed by the OCJ. The OM, SDJ, and court are increasingly perceived the best on integrity. The row-means in the last column show that the VK, OM, and court have above average appreciation of their counterparts’ integrity, contrary to the below average appreciation by the SDJ, police, and OCJ respectively. Looking at the directed relational integrity judgements, the positive evaluation of the SDJ and the court come from relatively high scores received from all of the other organisations, with not one sticking out with a less positive perception. In many cases a below average perception occurs in relations where the trustor and the trustee might adhere to other values when it comes to dealing with alarming situations for minors, namely the care perspective (OCJ, VK, SDJ) and the security perspective (police, OM, court).

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<sup>72</sup> Item 1: The following organisation has a strong will to bring each case to a successful conclusion; Item 2: Sound principles guide the other organisations behaviour.

Table 17 Directed mean integrity scores and their variance; N= number of measures available to calculate the mean

Trustor organisation	Trustee organisation													
	Police		OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N	Mean (S.D.)	N
Police	.	.	4,00 (,00)	3	3,50 (.)	1	3,83 (,29)	3	4,00 (,00)	2	4,00 (,00)	3	3,92 (,19)	12
OCJ	3,30 (,97)	5	.	.	3,40 (,65)	5	3,80 (,76)	5	4,00 (1,41)	2	4,20 (,91)	5	3,70 (,87)	22
VK	3,67 (,82)	6	4,00 (,84)	6	.	.	4,50 (,55)	6	4,13 (,85)	4	4,08 (,58)	6	4,07 (,73)	28
OM	4,33 (,56)	9	4,00 (,66)	9	3,94 (,73)	9	.	.	4,50 (,50)	9	4,28 (,57)	9	4,21 (,62)	45
Court	4,00 (,00)	5	3,75 (,65)	4	3,50 (,58)	4	4,64 (,38)	7	.	.	4,64 (,48)	7	4,22 (,63)	27
SDJ	3,38 (,85)	4	4,25 (,65)	4	4,13 (,25)	4	3,75 (,87)	4	4,50 (,41)	4	.	.	4,00 (,71)	20
All	3,83 (,77)	29	4,00 (,63)	26	3,76 (,64)	23	4,20 (,68)	25	4,33 (,62)	21	4,28 (,60)	30	4,06 (,69)	154

The qualitative findings can again tell us more about what is expected from a member of an organisation in order for them to be perceived as acting with integrity. Someone with integrity is described in the context of the judicial youth care as someone who is **discreet**, does **not leak information**, and does **not have a habit of gossiping about clients**. It was also linked to **professionalism** and **following deontological ethics** in their profession, and to **conscientious decision-making**. **Honesty** and **taking responsibility** are also necessary characteristics, as well as **taking the interest of the child as absolute priority**, without having ulterior motives. Some of these aspects are illustrated below.

The following quote of a criminologist at the OM about the public prosecutors illustrates well how **conscientious decision-making** can improve the perception of the integrity. This quote also reveals how decision that might be perceived as bad options, can be understood as resulting from honest intentions, when the conditions of the decision-making are better understood:

*They are definitely aware that they are dealing with children and not with objects. So you don't just decide something about the life of a child. You have to take everything into account and often there is not a good solution available for the child. You have to choose the least bad option. Those are very tough decisions to make. And they deal with this upright and serene. (H)*

Regarding **professionalism**, it was raised that despite the close relationship between the members of the different organisations, everyone was responsible enough to keep a professional distance when needed. When a judge decides against the advice of a counsellor, this was understood by the counsellor and not interpreted as a personal attack or as a decrease of the benevolence of the judge because as a respondent put it, ‘everyone knows the rules of the game’ (BO). The same holds true when the public prosecutor appeals a decision of the court when they do not agree or when a judge does not follow the public prosecutor’s demands:

*I observed that everyone can, on a professional level, keep the necessary distance and keep the focus on their own tasks. This implies that the public prosecutor is not always proven right in court, even when there was a good relationship between prosecutor and judge. But nobody resented anyone for that. (BI)*

Concerning the **ulterior motives** it was mentioned that magistrates or counsellors who are confronted with a personal involvement with a client, for example, a neighbour, where the independence could be at stake, they will raise this issue and transfer the case to another person:

*I have the impression that public prosecutors know very well what their deontology entails, and when they assert they cannot take part in court because of a personal interest in the case, they will report this and make sure they are replaced by a colleague. (BI)*

With regard to **honesty**, one respondent had a negative experience with the integrity of the counsellors by catching them on lies: ‘yes, there have been blatant lies, such as saying they had a consultation with a client, and afterwards it turns out this meeting never took place’ (BI). This seemed to have left a serious mark on the cooperation. Others acknowledge that honesty is more valued than covering up for certain mistakes:

*I have indeed a large trust in certain counsellors that they will look at the cases with a fresh view, and that they can admit when they viewed things wrongly and that based on new information they need to revise their point of view. (BN)*

## 6.2 Trustworthiness gap-model

The analysis of the survey and interview data revealed how trustworthiness is perceived on its three basic dimensions (ABI) and what specific abilities, benevolent behaviour, and displays of integrity were identified by the trustors as valuable characteristics to have in this context. Through further examination of the interview data certain mechanism were detected that make

the trustworthiness to be evaluated positively. Four interrelated elements were detected that play an important role in the determination of a positive or negative trustworthiness evaluation: (1) the trustor's expectations of the trustee's trustworthiness<sup>73</sup>, (2) the trustor's perception of the trustee's trustworthiness, (3) the trustee's intentions and behaviour, and (4) the trustee's perception of the trustor's expectations of the trustee's trustworthiness. The first two can be attributed to the beliefs of the trustor, while the last two reside within the trustee. When the distance between these four elements increases, the likelihood of a negative assessment of the trustworthiness is also increased.

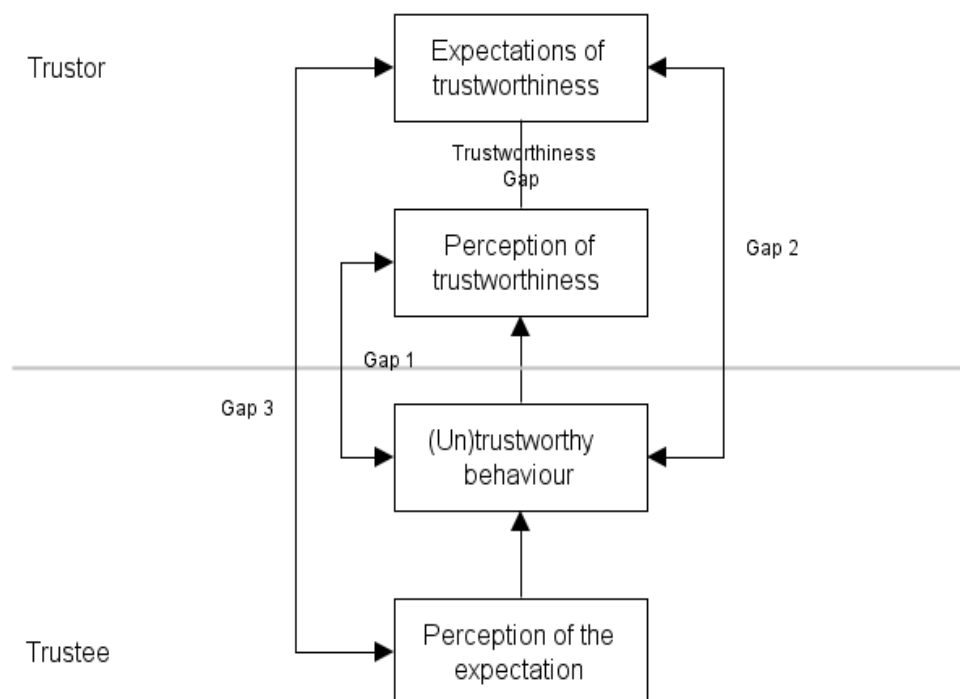


Figure 23 The trustworthiness gap model

As such, to be perceived as trustworthy, it does not suffice that trustees behave trustworthy according to their own standards. As soon as the perception of this behaviour is not in line with what the trustor expects from a trustworthy counterpart this perception will be evaluated less positively. Therefore, the main alignment necessary for a positive perception is the one between the expectations of the trustor, and the perception by the trustor. The gap between these two aspects will further be called **the trustworthiness gap**, as displayed in Figure 23. The more the perception about how a particular trustee *will* behave is aligned with the expectation of how a

<sup>73</sup> These expectations about how a trustee *should* behave, should not to be confused with the expectations of how a trustee *will* behave, which could be positive or negative, as found in the definition of trust by Rousseau et al. (1998) and in the universal trust model under perceived trustworthiness (Dietz, 2011). The perception of trustworthiness (expectation of how trustworthy a trustee *will be* in a certain interaction) is expected to be a function of a trustor's prior expectations of what *should* transpire during interaction with the trustee.



trustee *should* behave, the more trustworthy the particular trustee will be perceived. For example, when the trustor expects certain information to be complete rather than on time, but perceives information to be on time but not complete, there is a gap between the expectation and the perception.

Three other gaps that directly contribute to the width of this trustworthiness gap were detected (also displayed in Figure 23). A **first gap** can exist between the perception of the intentions and behaviour of the trustee and the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee. These two factors are not aligned when there is a bias in the perception. The trustee is then perceived differently from how they actually are, since this perception is only based on the limited information a trustor receives from the trustee. This distortion can take on different proportions, and will inevitably always be present due to the bounded rationality making it impossible for the trustor to be aware of every detail about the intentions and behaviour of the counterpart. Especially when the trustee works in another organisation as the trustor, the chances of observing each other's behaviour or communicating intentions decrease. A negative bias emerges when actual trustworthy behaviour remains unobserved. In the judicial youth care, this can for example happen when a report is sent in time by a member of an organisation but due to a failure in the delivery system the report is received late by the receiving organisation, who then perceives the information provider as untrustworthy and becomes less willing to rely on them for future reports. A positive bias in perception can happen when, for example, untrustworthy behaviour is masked. An example is the above-mentioned experience where a counsellor was caught lying about having consultations with clients. This lie, as long as it remains covered, indeed creates a more trustworthy perception about the abilities of the counsellor. However, once the truth came out, not only is the ability perceived more negatively, the integrity will also take a hit.

A **second gap** exists between the trustor's expectation of a trustee, and the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee. Indeed, when the intentions and behaviours of an individual do not align with what is expected by the trustor, the chances increase they will not be perceived as trustworthy. This is the case when a trustee does not perform the tasks in a trustworthy manner, but also when the trustor has unrealistic expectations of the trustee or the trustor and trustee have different views on what a trustworthy person should do in the trustee's situation. When expectations are moderate it will be easier for a trustee to meet these expectations than when the expectations are high.

*A tension we sometimes have is that we have the expectation that the SDJ can solve anything, which is not true. They also bump into problems, they will also need to try and come to an agreement with the clients first. (AL)*

This gap can exist independent of whether the first gap is present or not, and even when the second gap is absent, the first gap can still occur due to the distortion between how someone behaves and how they are perceived.

The **third gap** detected in the interviews is between the prior expectations of the trustor and the perception the trustee has about these expectations. This perception can also be biased, and as a result, the trustee can be unaware of what behaviour would be appreciated by the trustor. When a trustee then behaves according to the biased perception they hold, the second gap can become wider, and ultimately the trustworthiness gap will be affected. An example from the judicial youth care chain is the situation where a counsellor assumes that a police assistant asking for additional information on a case will appreciate it when this counsellor holds strictly true to what legally can and should be shared, and does not reveal extra information. While their might indeed be members of the police that appreciate rigorously respecting the legal limitations, there might be others that put more emphasis on the necessity of flexible information sharing. Depending on what the trustor expects, the integrity of the respondent can be evaluated positively, or the benevolence can be evaluated positively. Within an interaction, the trustor should make clear which expectations are held. This is illustrated by the following quote of one police-assistant who expects a counsellor not to share too much information:

*Competence does play a role, because you have these grey areas where you could be inclined to cross a line. So you need to trust the other and you can only do that when there is competence, which is the case. [...] And I can count on their integrity, because the fact that these lines are not crossed is the clearest sign of integrity. If I call and they say “I can’t tell you that”, I’m like “nice”! [...] Benevolence is less important to me and this has to do with the same thing. Whenever we reach the line of the professional confidentiality you need to assume there is benevolence but you won’t see it. You will hit a wall but you shouldn’t assume there is no benevolence, you need to trust that this stems from competence and integrity. (W)*

Each closure of these gaps can contribute to the closure of the trustworthiness gap, where the expectations and the perception by the trustor are better aligned. There will also be a hierarchy

between the different aspects that need to be aligned. First, as long as the expectations of the trustor are not realistic, the trustworthiness gap will not be able to close because the trustee will never be able to pose behaviour that meets the expectations of the trustor. Second, it should be clear to the trustee what these expectations are, since otherwise the behaviour and the perception of the behaviour will not be favourable to the trustee. Third, the trustee should behave according to these expectations, and fourth, and last, the behaviour should be perceived correctly as trustworthy behaviour, with as little negative bias as possible.

The fact that the expectations and perceptions stem from one person – the trustor – and the behaviour and the perception of the expectations from another – the trustee – and both reside in different organisations, opens up the possibilities for these dimensions to be misaligned. A lack of communication from both sides could be the root cause of any existing disagreement. The four elements of the gap model, together with the possible gaps existing between them are difficult to observe in trust situations and to keep separate. It is possible that certain gaps exist without the relevant parties being aware of this. Distrust will generally always be attributed by the trustor to the behaviour of the trustee. However, this is only one element that plays a role, and the other three elements should be taken into account. Therefore, a gap analysis can be a first step when trust problems arise, to check where possible misalignments are present. To perform such gap-analysis a checklist was developed for organisations to go over to detect possible misalignments between each of the elements, presented in Figure 19. First should be checked whether there is indeed a gap between what the trustor expects and what they perceive. When this is the case further analysis can reveal what might be the issue causing this discrepancy. It is important to keep in mind that because different stakeholders might have different and possibly contradicting expectations from the trustee it is an illusion that the gaps can be totally eliminated. As such, it can occur that the same person is perceived as trustworthy by one person and as untrustworthy by the other, due to a difference in prior expectations from both trustors. However, the mere awareness of a gap could offer a better understanding of why certain tensions exist, open up communication about possible tensions, and prevent further escalations due to frustrations and misunderstandings. As will also become clear in the next chapter, by merely the experience of working together, many of the aspects of the gap-analysis will come to the attention. For example, when working together with the same organisation for several years, someone will become aware of the expectations of the counterpart, and many of the gaps will tighten over time. Therefore, the format of this gap-analysis is only a tool to speed up and structure processes that would otherwise gradually happen as well. It can also offer a common language between the parties to talk about an otherwise sensitive topic to bring up.

Table 18 Checklist for the trustworthiness gap-analysis

	Ability	Benevolence	Integrity
Expected “How does the trustor think the trustee <i>should</i> act?”	What do the trustors expect from an able trustee and does this outweigh the benevolence and integrity? Are these expectations realistic?	What do the trustors expect from a benevolent trustee and does this outweigh the ability and integrity? Are these expectations realistic?	What do the trustors expect from the integrity of the trustee and does this outweigh the ability and benevolence? Are these expectations realistic?
Perceived “How does the trustor think the trustee <i>will</i> act?”	How is the trustee’s ability perceived by the trustor, does this match the expectations, and is it a correct reflection of the trustee’s behaviour?	How is the trustee’s benevolence perceived by the trustor, does this match the expectations, and is it a correct reflection of the trustee’s behaviour?	How is the trustee’s integrity perceived by the trustor, does this match the expectations, and is it a correct reflection of the trustee’s behaviour?
Manifested “How does a trustee (intent to) behave?”	How able does the trustee behave in certain situations, and does this match what the trustee and trustor both value?	How benevolent does the trustee behave in certain situations, and does this match what the trustee and trustor both value?	Does the trustee behave with integrity in certain situations, and does this match what the trustee and trustor both value?
Perceived expectation “How does the trustee think he should behave?”	What does the trustee think that the trustor expects and values concerning the ability of the trustee?	What does the trustee think that the trustor expects and values concerning the benevolence of the trustee?	What does the trustee think that the trustor expects and values concerning the integrity of the trustee?

It is also possible that expectations concerning the different dimensions of trustworthiness are contradicting. For example, a trustor can expect that the trustee gives both timely and complete reports (expected ability) and at the same time is ready to help the other whenever necessary (expected benevolence). Alternatively, a trustor might expect the trustee never to make any mistakes (expected ability), and at the same time expect the trustee to be honest and admit mistakes when they are made (expected integrity). For the trustee it might be impossible to adhere to both at the same time, and might get into conflicting situations when dealing with the trustor. Therefore, it is also important to point these contradicting expectations out to the

trustor, and to clear out which expectation outweighs the other, so the trustee has better direction about how to behave towards the counterpart.

With the earlier identification of which qualities are appreciated in this context, the first row of this checklist is filled out for the judicial youth care chain. Another application of this checklist in practice can be illustrated by a situation of a misalignment described in the interviews. The judges reported that the counsellors of the SDJ should be always reachable (expected reachability) but that this was not always the case (perceived reachability). This lack of reachability was attributed to the fact that counsellors work part-time, work from home, or are not flexible enough to be reachable when they are not at their desk. The counsellors reported that they are indeed sometimes unreachable (manifested reachability) when they are away for vocational training. They might be under the impression that the judges do not expect them to be reachable at those times because the judges would also appreciate them building their competency (perceived expected reachability). After a discussion between the two parties using the above framework, the trustors (the judges) can understand that the unreachability is due to another trustworthy behaviour, namely getting more trained counsellors (adjusted perceived), and they might correct their expectations to being always reachable, except when they are in training (adjusted expected reachability). The trustees, here the SDJ counsellors, can learn about how important it is for the judges that they are reachable as much as possible (adjusted perceived expected reachability) and they can agree to make sure to inform the judges when they are in training, or to make sure that even during training they are reachable all the time (adjusted manifested reachability).

It should be noted that there are also possible disadvantages to the assimilation by closing these gaps. For example, after a while the expectations can be tuned down so much by everyone that the standard of work decreases and that no efforts are done anymore to improve behaviour that does not meet the expectations. As a police assistant describes, he no longer gets frustrated when they perceive their efforts in a case are undone further in the chain, when no action or the wrong action is taken: "It's not necessary that the judges are transparent, that they explain to me their argumentation. [...] Maybe that's a deformity on my part, that after a while you realise it is pointless to have that expectation. In my eyes this is now an unjust expectation" (W). Therefore, parties will need to find a balance between the optimal distance that can occur between the different factors.

### 6.3 Chapter summary and discussion

In this chapter, it was described that in general the individuals working in the judicial youth care chain are perceived as trustworthy. Each organisation is perceived as able to perform their tasks. For individual members of these organisations this means exchanging information that is correct and complete, in a timely and efficient way, and having good communication skills. They are perceived as benevolent and willing to take the needs and requirements of the others into account. The former is more applicable to the information gatherers, while the latter to the decision makers. In this case, this entails a willingness to cooperate, a flexible attitude, and facilitate the other's work. There is no doubt that there is sufficient integrity among all those working in the chain. In this case, this means a trustee is discreet, professional, honest, and has the right priorities. The trustworthiness of the police differs significantly with that of the OM, court, and SDJ, mainly due to a lower mean score on ability and integrity, but not on benevolence. The significantly different trustworthiness of the VK, compared to that of the OM, court and SDJ is due to a lower score on all three aspects of the scale. When there is a lack of trustworthiness detected this is not attributed to traits of the individual actors, but rather to restrictions linked with the organisation of the work, procedural regulations, or legal restrictions.

After describing the levels of trustworthiness in the case and the qualities that contribute to ability, benevolence, and integrity, the mechanisms that cause a positive perception were also identified. This gave rise to the trustworthiness gap model, where four factors need to be aligned before a positive perception of trustworthiness is achieved: (1) the trustor's expectations of the trustee's trustworthiness, (2) the trustor's perception of the trustee's trustworthiness, (3) the trustee's intentions and behaviour, and (4) the trustee's perception of the trustor's expectations of the trustee's trustworthiness. Someone is perceived as trustworthy when they behave the way they are expected to behave, so when the motives and behaviours are in line with or even exceed what is expected. The second part of this statement informs that not only the behaviour of the trustee influences the perception, but also the expectations of the trustor. As such, one's behaviour can be perceived as trustworthy by one trustor, and untrustworthy to another, depending on the expectations of the trustor. Dietz (2011, p. 218) described something similar saying "social workers and investment bankers look for different indicators of trustworthiness; what may be a bold innovation at Google might be viewed as unconscionable recklessness at IBM".

Similar gap models have been proposed in other fields, such as the SERVQUAL model in retail marketing research, where the quality of service delivery is described (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

These researchers have developed a measurement tool to measure the extent to which consumers' pre-consumption expectations of quality are confirmed or disconfirmed by their actual perceptions of the service experience. This model aided in the refinement of the trustworthiness gap model by splitting the manifestation and the perceived expected manifestation into two concepts instead of one behaviour component. Another example is the audit expectation gap where there is a difference between what the public and financial statement users believe auditors are responsible for and what auditors themselves believe their responsibilities are (Liggio, 1974). Or even the strain theory of Robert Merton, where strains exist because individuals have higher expectations than what they can personally achieve (Merton, 1938), which can eventually lead to criminal behaviour.

Even though many scholars agree that the perception of the trustworthiness is influenced by other factors than the actual motives and behaviour of the trustee (as seen in the model of Dietz, with many various input factors), the expectations of the trustor has never been theorised as such. The only part that is usually included on the individual level of the trustor is the general propensity to trust, while here the task-specific expectations of a trustworthy individual are added, which constitutes an important contribution to the field.

In the next chapter, an evaluation of the factors contributing to this overall positive perception, and which factors still hinder a positive perception is performed. The earlier proposed gap model is used to show the mechanism through which these factors have contributed to the perception, namely by closing one or more of the gaps between expectation, perception, and manifestation of the ability, the benevolence, and the integrity of the trustee.





## Chapter 7 Inputs of perceived trustworthiness

In the previous chapter, the perceived trustworthiness of the members of the judicial youth care chain was discussed. It was determined – based on both quantitative and qualitative data – that this perception was generally high for the organisations, and for the individuals within these organisations, apart from some incidental negative experiences. The qualities contributing to a trustworthy image in this context were also revealed together with an assessment of whether they were present or not. At the end of the chapter, a gap-model was designed, where it was assumed that for a positive perception to arise, the perception of the trustee's ability, benevolence, and integrity should closely match what the trustor expects from a trustworthy person. When this is the case, the gap between expectation and perception, i.e. the trustworthiness gap, is small. When the gap between the perception and the prior expectation is wide, the evaluation of the trustworthiness will be negative. Next to the trustworthiness gap, three other gaps were detected that affect the widening or narrowing of this gap: (1) a gap between the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee and the perception of this by the trustor, (2) a gap between the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee and the expectations of the trustor, and (3) a gap between the expectations of the trustor and the perception of these expectations by the trustee.

The purpose of this chapter is to answer research question 3 on what context specific inputs influence the perception of the trustworthiness, and how they increase or decrease the trustworthiness. It will unveil which characteristics of the judicial youth care chain cause these positive perceptions of trustworthiness, despite the high levels of risk, the lack of hierarchy, and the diversity of the cooperating organisations. These inputs are often referred to as antecedents of trustworthiness, while the term inputs will be used here, coinciding with the term used in the universal trust model. Building on the trustworthiness gap model developed in Chapter 6, it is also analysed in which way the inputs contribute to widening or narrowing the gaps between the different aspects of the trustworthiness perception. These insights help to understand better the possible managerial approaches to increasing trust, a field that until now remained elusive and unapproachable, and offers guidance for future research. Following the universal trust process of Dietz (2011) the characteristics influencing the perceived trustworthiness constitute the input section of the trust process, i.e. “the sources of evidence for the foundational trustworthiness beliefs” (Dietz, 2011, p. 216). Dietz differentiates between different categories of inputs (see Figure 24), and in the current chapter the focus will lie on the

context specific inputs present in this chain: the relational, institutional, and organisational determinants that shape the relationship between the trustor and trustee, and inhibit or support a positive perception of the trustworthiness. The micro-level individual aspects (trustor's predisposition to trust and trustee's character, motives, abilities, and behaviours) were disregarded because there is no expectation that these will have a context-specific impact on the perception of trustworthiness. The focus will go exclusively to the nature of the trustor-trustee relationship (i.e. common values, common goals, interdependence, risk in the relationship, strength of the relationship (Gillespie, 2003)), and the situational influences in the form of organisational constraints (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). Institutions are to be understood as formal or informal rules of behaviour that represent structural arrangements in a certain context. Collectives of people in a common environment could understand, thanks to these institutions, how they should act and can predict how others will act in a relationship with them. This gives more room for trusting someone, and taking chances. The presence, and strength of these institutions can differ greatly according to the context, and empirical cases will most likely vary from each other (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011).

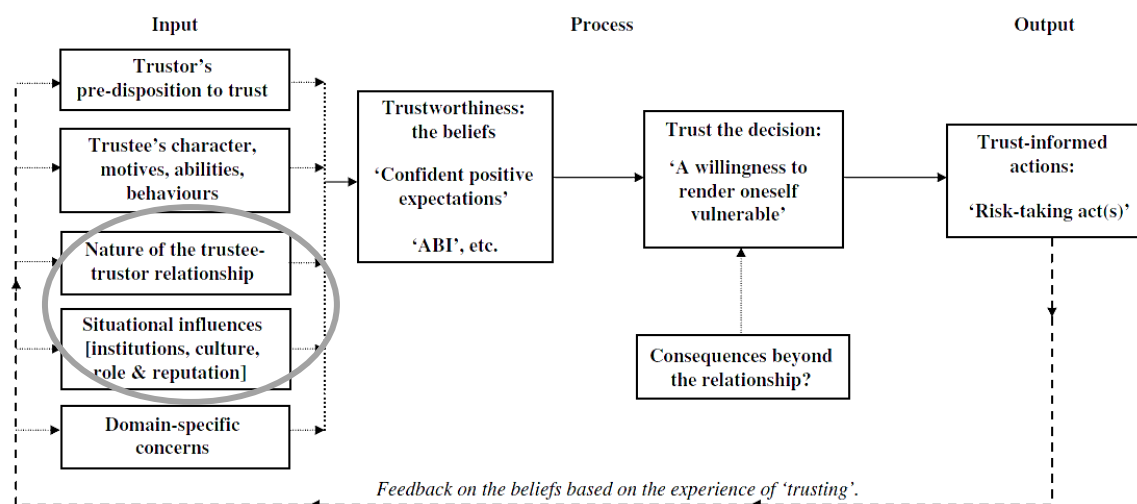


Figure 24 The universal trust process (Dietz, 2011, p. 219), indicating the input segment which is explored in this chapter

The input factors emerged from the qualitative data rather than the quantitative data. During the interviews, the respondents were asked to explain why they viewed their relations in a certain way concerning trustworthiness, and how their perception of the trustworthiness was influenced by the organisational and relational features of the cooperation. Items on the different input factors were not included in the final survey, since little prior knowledge was available on which inputs would play a role in this context.

In this chapter, it is first described how the factors emerged from the interviews and how they were organised in different categories and sub-categories. Each of the characteristics that received sufficient substance throughout the interviews are then presented, with illustrations of the empirical foundations of these findings by quotes of the respondents. For each factor it is checked how it affects the perception of trustworthiness, namely by linking it to the gap model and its effect on the different gaps. Every section on a specific factor is concluded with propositions recapitulating how an input factor is expected to affect trustworthiness perceptions. A final summary of the findings is found at the end of this chapter, where the inductive findings are also connected to prior research on these particular inputs.

## 7.1 Categorisation of the different input factors

The interview transcripts were analysed using thematic coding as described in Chapter 5, in order to detect the inputs recurring throughout the respondents' dialogue. These could be categorised in a logical manner in two sets of factors: one set contains *organisational* characteristics, while the other set contains *interorganisational* characteristics (see Figure 25).

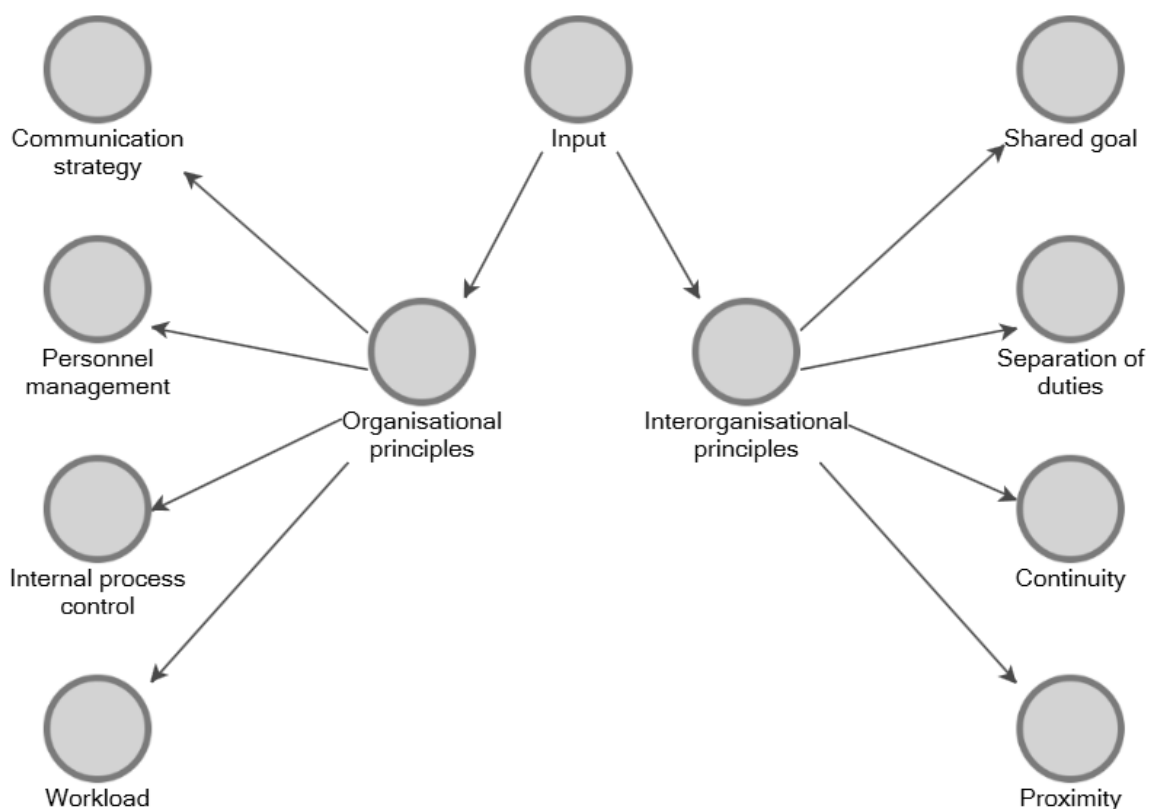


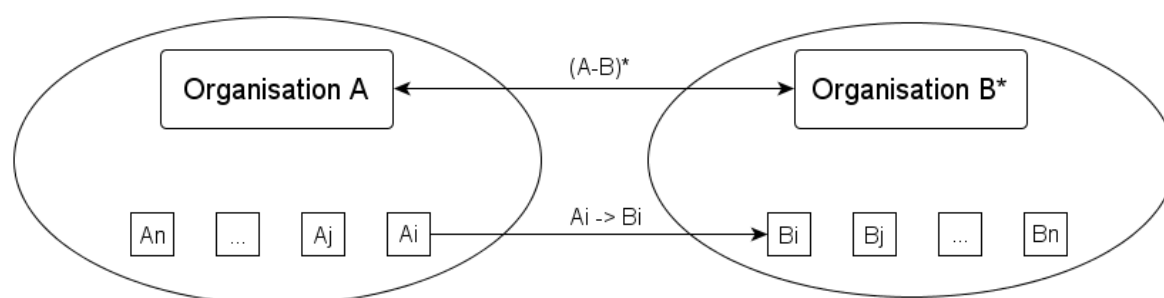
Figure 25 The parent and child input-nodes that emerged from in-depth thematic analysis of the interview transcripts

The set of **organisational characteristics** refers to features of the organisation of the *trustee*. These are the principles that each organisation adopts, depending on the choices made by the

internal management, the specific type of organisation and the work they perform, or the budgetary and legal restrictions. Four organisational characteristics emerged from the interviews: communication strategy, personnel management, internal process control, and workload.

The set of **interorganisational characteristics** refers to features of the links between the different trustor and trustee organisations. These are the overarching principles of the network governing the relations between the cooperating parties. Some features are the result of deliberate choices made by the administration of the alliance; others are inherent to this type of cooperation. Similarly, four interorganisational characteristics emerged from the interviews: the stipulation of a shared (societal) goal, the separation of duties, the continuity of the alliance, and the proximity between the involved organisations.

Some of these inputs are manageable while others are not, but awareness of their presence can help in understanding and accepting why certain levels of trust are present. Certain inputs on the interorganisational level shape the organisational inputs and the interplay between both sets of inputs will be underlined when describing the separate factors. What is ultimately looked at in this chapter is the perception of the trustworthiness on the interpersonal level ( $A_i \rightarrow B_i$ )<sup>74</sup>, and how this is influenced by the organisational features of the trustee organisation,  $B^*$ , and the interorganisational features,  $(A \leftrightarrow B)^*$  (see Figure 26). The features of the trustor organisation,  $A^*$ , such as the administrative burden or the trusting culture of organisation A, did not surface as important determining factors of the perception  $A_i$  has of  $B_i$ , and are not further discussed. As said, the micro-level determinants,  $A_i^*$ ,  $B_i^*$ , and  $(A_i \leftrightarrow B_i)^*$ , were not part of the focus of this study.



*Figure 26 The perceived trustworthiness of trustee  $B_i$  assessed by trustor  $A_i$  as influenced by (among others) the characteristics of organisation B and the characteristics of the link between organisation A and B*

<sup>74</sup> The following notation is used: A = organisation of the trustor; B = organisation of the trustee;  $A_i$  = an individual trustor;  $B_i$  = an individual trustee. A star (\*) stands for the characteristics of that entity.

Certain factors received more attention than others did, as can be seen from the coding hierarchy in Figure 27. Overall, the organisational characteristics received more coding than the interorganisational characteristics. The communication strategy of the trustee organisation received the most attention during the interviews while the proximity was covered the least by the respondents. This coding hierarchy only serves as a first impression of how much the respondents actually talked about a certain factor relative to the others. It can be an indication of the relative importance of this input factor, but this is not necessarily the case, since other reasons why topics get more coverage during an interview are the ease of communicating about a certain topic, the ease to observe a certain topic, or the lack of sensitive nature of the topic.

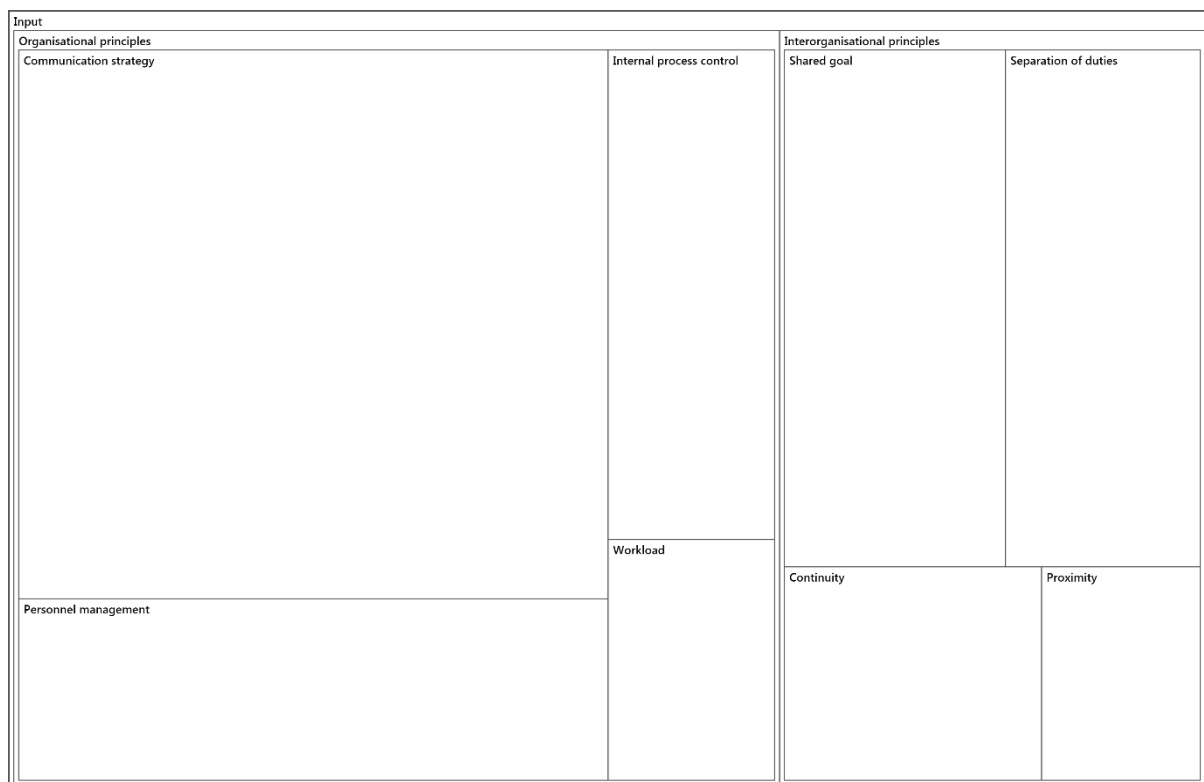


Figure 27 The coding hierarchy of the different sub-categories

Some input factors that emerged during the initial coding round were not included in further analysis. These were left out because of the limited coverage during the interviews, which prevented making convincing statements about those factors. Nonetheless, an overview of the omitted inputs that did not make the cut is given in Table 19, since it might be of interest to practitioners to know what other factors had (a smaller) influence, and to researchers in other contexts, where these inputs might have a larger impact. Table 19 displays the deleted nodes (a node is a collection of references within the interviews about a specific theme), together with how many times respondents mentioned this node, and in how many references (a reference is an interview segment about the node).

*Table 19 Nodes excluded from further analysis due to their low significance*

Node	Number of respondents	Number of references
Deontology	2	5
External process control	3	5
Rejuvenation	2	4
Common enemy	2	3
Digitalisation	1	3
Flexibility	1	3
Boundary spanner	1	1
Risk society	1	1

## 7.2 Organisational characteristics of the trustee organisation

The management of the trustee organisation influences the perception of its members by the members of the other organisations. In the judicial youth care chain trustors from other organisations have a limited say about how the trustee organisation should be managed, therefore, the management of the trustee organisation should keep in mind what (unintended) effects its policies may have on the perception of the trustworthiness of their members in their external relationships. The four identified organisational characteristics will be discussed in order of decreasing frequency of being mentioned during the interviews, as can be seen in Table 20.

*Table 20 Number of references per sub-category of organisational inputs*

Node	# respondents	# references
Communication strategy	43	357
Personnel management	35	118
Internal process control	31	90
Workload	27	44

### 7.2.1 Communication strategy

How an organisation sets up communication towards the other partners in the chain has an important impact on how trustworthy the members are perceived in the long run. Generally, a

personal and informal style of communication, together with open communication can have a positive effect on the perception of the individuals within these organisations.

#### 7.2.1.1 *Support frequent personal and informal communication*

*Familiarity breeds trust.*

An organisation can influence the way and the frequency in which their members communicate with the members of the other organisations in several ways. The members of the judicial youth care chain currently have many opportunities to communicate with each other, in person, via telephone, e-mail, and through paper contacts (post or fax). The majority of the contacts happen during operational encounters when working on cases, and during policy meetings. During these times of contact, many different mechanisms directly contribute to the perception of the trustworthiness of the counterparts. These moments of contact between the cooperating members allow the trustor and trustee to get to know each other on a personal level and to remove some boundaries between the individuals. Moreover, it increases the personal information available to assess another's intentions and behaviours within the relationship, as asserted by this OCJ team leader:

*Meetings are very important, because there you get to know each other in a broader sense than on case-level. And there you can talk about expectations that are present at both sides, and whether or not these expectations can be met and answered. (AK)*

Through **frequent personal encounters**, you indeed get to know the other on a personal level and assess the trustworthiness from first-hand experience. When it turns out there is something off with the ability, benevolence, or integrity of one of the trustees, this behaviour can be detected, and the individual can be corrected or even removed from the system, as the following judge describes:

*Only through frequent personal contact you can assess the integrity of the other. So there should always be personal contact. As such, dishonest individuals can be detected. When these are detected, I would immediately report this to the head of the social service. We are only as strong as the weakest link in the chain. (BO)*

**Informal contacts** were found to be important for the exchange of extra information to find the best solution for a child faster. Moreover, individuals get to know the counterparts'

personalities, which can smooth further cooperation between these individuals. A counsellor of the SDJ sees for example benefits in seeing the police in ways that are more informal:

*I believe the youth and family police section has often a lot of information about a family that we don't have, so you need to pick up the phone, the person needs to be there, we need to be accessible when they need us. So more informal contacts would certainly be an added value. Not in a setting where we see each other once a month with all youth sections and all counsellors. This wouldn't result in anything, when it's this formal. (P)*

It was mentioned that there has already been a shift from formality to informality, especially concerning the magistrates, that are felt to have left their ivory tower. On the other hand, some reported a shift back towards more formal procedures, because of the formalisation of the tasks, and the increased administrative requirements. Younger employees also start with a more formal attitude than those that have been around for a while and know each other on a more personal level.

*Proposition:* Meetings between the organisations offer an opportunity to share the expectations that the counter organisation holds (gap 3).

*Proposition:* Supporting personal encounters with members of an organisation can remove bias between the manifestation and the perception of the behaviour (gap 1), and adding an informal dimension to the personal encounters will enforce this effect.

#### 7.2.1.2 Support open and transparent communication

*Seeing is believing.*

Communication between the organisations can have an effect on the perception of the trustworthiness of the involved organisations. Recurring forms of communication that are induce trustworthiness that were detected are (a) providing feedback, (b) negotiating about issues and making agreements, and (c) rectifying misunderstandings that might exist between the organisations.

**Providing feedback** about cases, work processes, or past events was mentioned frequently as a factor that improves trust between the organisations. However, providing feedback is not extensively foreseen in the legal governing guidelines of the cooperation and sometimes even prohibited. Because of this, much depends on the benevolence of the one who can give the feedback and the way in which this is encouraged by the organisation. As such, a party providing feedback will be viewed as more benevolent. Next to this, providing feedback can also create a



better understanding for undertaken actions. As such, it can remove some bias between the actual behaviour and the perception of that behaviour by the trustor. Behaviour that is perceived as incompetent, for example, can then be interpreted as competent behaviour due to the additional available information used for assessing the other's trustworthiness. The following quote illustrates how feedback on decisions by a judge that differ from the advice of the counsellor can only be understood when the judge shares the reasons behind the decision:

*I believe trust should be about respect for each other's point of view, so that you are able to speak your mind. And that decisions are also framed as to why they are taken. If you give an advice, and the judge takes another decision, it should be outlined why this was the case. Because you need to continue with the clients, so you need to understand where the judge is coming from. This is trust, that you can stand behind each other's decisions. [...] And if the decision is different from what you advised, and then you understand, "ok, this has been viewed from a different angle", then you can understand it, but you need to know it before you can understand it. (O)*

In personal contacts, certain problems about the workflow and the interaction between the organisations can be discussed. This can lead to **mutual agreements** between two or more organisations to increase the performance of the judicial youth care, and to improve the working conditions of either organisation, by reducing the workload for example. The agreements can emerge from formal or informal contact, and the more personal contact there is, the more opportunities for these kind of mutual agreements to originate and form. Once an agreement is formed, it can go a long way in improving the interactions between the organisations. Agreements signal what is expected from individuals in the cooperation and offer guidelines to the trustee on the desired behaviour, allowing them to adjust their actual intentions and behaviour, as the following judge and team leader of the SDJ report:

*Competence is a matter of experience. And I once had a counsellor, a younger one, and I said "I would prefer you to notify me sooner or keep me posted more often" and that was that. In time this became one of the best counsellors. (BM)*

*We have to try to give the court a report around one month in advance of a hearing, but for that it is important that we know which date the hearing is. And for things like that it is important to coordinate this and sit together to see how we can improve our functioning, how the OM and the court can improve their functioning, and form an agreement on this. This is not an official agreement, these are just good practices that we see somewhere else and try to implement here. (R)*

When individuals from the different organisations have plenty of opportunities to encounter each other and maintain a professional personal relationship with each other, there is also more opportunity to discuss certain discordances or disagreements, to **allow for rectifications**. This can help to prevent frustrations from growing and fester. The following criminologist at the OM describes such situation:

*It has happened for example that a case didn't go smoothly, something went wrong here and also at the mandated facilities. So we contacted them to explain what had happened, and to discuss this, because this caused frustration from both sides. They might think "Damn it, why haven't they acted in this case?" and we think "Well, why didn't you do anything?" And that is rectified, which was necessary, otherwise the relationship might turn sour. (AJ)*

When a small frustration or problem can be communicated openly and in a friendly matter, there are more chances that this frustration can be corrected. This will offer the possibility to both parties to display trustworthy behaviour, which would otherwise be unlikely. The 'complaining' party could explain the issue in a calm manner before things explode, while the receiving party gets the chance to show its benevolence in adjusting their behaviour according to the complaint, and to improve long-term perceptions of its abilities. These things are easier discussed in moments of close personal contact, where third parties unrelated to the issue are not present, as this criminologist adds:

*The counsellors came to meet our new colleague, and then we discussed a few issues, and what they expected from us in those cases. To clarify those issues and what to do with them. There are large policy meetings as well but there are other actors there too, that's not the time to discuss this sort of things. (AJ)*

Moreover, through communication the trustor gets to know more details about the technicalities of the trustee's conditions and working procedures. This can make the trustor

more aware of the possibilities and limitations of the counterpart, which helps managing the expectations of the trustor towards the trustee, and helps align the expectations within the cooperation. Being able to communicate your limitations makes the trustor understand better why they should not be expecting certain things from the trustee, and thus avoid constant disappointment. Behaviour that was ascribed to someone's lack of abilities, benevolence, or integrity, can now rightfully be ascribed to factors external to the trustee. In addition, when an open discourse is installed about possible dysfunctions and the origins of these dysfunctions, such as understaffing, then there can be a better understanding of why certain mistakes happen, without ascribing it to the untrustworthiness of an individual. This can correct existing misperceptions about the trustworthiness of the counterpart. The following coordinator of a VK and judge describe a positive and negative experience with open communication respectively:

*We frequently sit together with them where we get to know them. It is of course subjective but it helps to get to know each other and you get clarity on what we can expect from each other and what not. Trust can grow because of this. (AZ)*

*The team leader in general does take responsibility and dares to reprimand his personnel, but in one certain case it was covered up. [...] Which is annoying if you want to avoid the same problem from happening again, since it seemed impossible to discuss this afterwards. (BI)*

*Proposition:* Providing feedback is a manifestation of benevolent behaviour and removes some bias in the perception (gap 1 & 2).

*Proposition:* During personal contact agreements can emerge which create guidelines for the trustee about what is expected from them by the trustor (gap 3).

*Proposition:* Open communication can remove bias from the perception by clearing out misinterpretations of behaviour (gap 1).

#### 7.2.2 Personnel management

An organisation is responsible for hiring and supporting their employees, a process through which the organisation's trustworthiness can be build. This starts with the selection of trustworthy individuals, and continues with integrating the members in the deontological culture of the organisation and supporting them with continuous feedback and training to preserve and improve their ability, benevolence, and integrity. Finally, trustworthy members should be valued and untrustworthy behaviour should be corrected. Within most of the organisations in the judicial youth care, however, there is quite a rigid system for hiring and

firing individuals, with a system of exams and allocation of employees to local districts by the general administration, and with permanent tenure within the different functions within the chain. These processes are described separately in more detail below.

#### 7.2.2.1 *Selection of trustworthy members*

*Birds of a feather flock together.*

What was mentioned frequently is that, despite the fact that there is little autonomy of a department over the selection and removal of the members of their organisation, there is a system of self-selection in place for caring and socially engaged individuals. Persons applying to the positions of counsellors, youth police, juvenile magistrates, or criminologists are likely already committed to the shared cause. This is because the shared goal of childcare is seen as an important public task, where the stakes are high when not well performed. It is seen as an essential obligation, which can have an important impact on the lives of children in need, their family, and the society as a whole. This appeals to a sense of integrity and work ethic, increasing the commitment of those involved.

*It has to do with involvement. It is very hard to work in this line of work when you couldn't care less about the fate of these minors. You wouldn't last even four months without being exposed. Because you can't just put in the required hours and not care. And because this involvement with the fate of the minors is a requirement to be able to function, in the long run only the right people will be in the right place. (BI)*

*I generally have positive experiences. Our matters ensure that the people want to do the extra effort to achieve cooperation, to realise the best solution for a family, keeping in mind this is in the interest of the children. So I believe the subject matter of our work helps to just do something extra. (J)*

In case a less devoted individual does enter the organisation, it is expected they will not remain in the position for a long time. These professions are demanding, requiring them to deal with tragic issues at times, while the returns might be limited (financially, but also in the improvements of the minors). A high level of intrinsic motivation is needed to keep the individuals in their positions.

*I'm sure most of them are motivated, when you see how hard these counsellors need to work, they don't really earn much, so they must be motivated, otherwise you will soon look for something else. (BA)*

For the magistrates (prosecutors and judges) this was apparently not always the case, where recollections were made about times where the juvenile sections in the courts were not spontaneously occupied, and magistrates were appointed to these functions, often against their wishes. Nowadays, this is said to be less the case.

*Proposition:* A shared goal with high social stakes increases the integrity of the participants, both through internal motivation and self-selection of trustworthy members (gap 2).

#### 7.2.2.2 Supporting trustworthy members: Initiation, training, and expertise

*One bad apple can spoil the bunch.*

After the selection of trustworthy people, their intentions and behaviour should be maintained and increased through training and support. To establish this, first it is important to **inaugurate** newly employed members of the organisation, which speeds up the process of mastering the details of the profession. In the judicial youth care chain specifically, the observation was made that this can still be improved in some respects. As one judge remarked, the transition of tasks to new counsellors, for example, could be improved:

*When you just start you always start from scratch in a way, and for the counsellors this will be no different. [...] You have counsellors who leave, maybe to an SDJ in another district, you have those who are on sick leave, or on maternity leave, and they should try and reduce the amount of transfers of a case between counsellors. This should be managed according to the time of absence, to avoid that counsellors need to familiarise with a new case again.*  
(BI)

A second way to support trustworthiness in the organisation is by providing **vocational training** to the members to keep up to date with the latest evolutions in their field and to improve permanently their skills and expertise. The following judge explains how this can affect the actual abilities of the counsellors:

*There is competence, but I do believe that continuous mentoring is needed, certainly for the younger employees, but also the older ones. As the legislation changes, also certain insights change. I believe there is a need of education there. But also for us, for me.* (BN)

A third way to ensure the team of an organisation has the expertise is by allowing them to **specialise** in certain tasks, and to organise the team in a way that members have time and resources to become specialised in their field. In the judicial youth care chain, two specific

situations were detected where this was problematic. The first is the difference in specialisation between large and small police districts, where in smaller districts one police-assistant is responsible for all alarming cases in their area, and has additional tasks assigned to them. In larger police districts, designated police-assistants are full-time assigned for these tasks, because alarming situations happen more frequently and there is more staff. These assistants become more knowledgeable over time in how to deal with these kinds of cases, because there is more opportunity to gain experience. A similar difference was mentioned between police officers that were not part of the youth brigade and police assistants from the youth brigade. The reports of the former were said to be less well composed, with less feeling for the particular matter.

*In a police district with less experienced police officers compared to the youth brigade in a large district working with real social assistants – even though this is being done in the smaller districts as well now, so in the last years it has improved – but ten years ago there was a serious difference in quality, between the large city and the outer zones. Now not anymore, but they do miss that ‘Fingerspitzengefühl’ to take certain risks. (AX)*

The second problematic situation that was observed was that increasingly juvenile public prosecutors are replaced by designated lawyers, notaries, or university professors when there are not sufficient prosecutors available. These deputy public prosecutors are less acquainted with juvenile matters, which jeopardises their trustworthiness.

*There is a worrisome evolution, in the sense that nowadays more use is made of deputy magistrates that need to help out at the juvenile public prosecutor’s office. [...] They are less knowledgeable and are less inclined to think along. The added value at the hearings is not as big because they miss certain reflexes of a professional magistrate working with this matter for years and years. [...] It’s not out of bad will, but you notice the approach is totally different, less thorough, and less in-depth. (BI)*

Certain calls for austerity and flexibility might increase these trends in shaping more interchangeable workforces, however, caution is warranted for possible unwanted effects on the perception of the trustworthiness and ultimately on the trust levels between the organisations.

*Proposition:* Inauguration, training, and specialisation ensure that the actual intentions and behaviour of the members remain trustworthy (gap 2).

*Never change a winning team.*

Another challenge for the organisations is to hold onto the trustworthy employees in the organisation. Especially since indeed the lack of financial motivation and the high work-pressure and emotional distress encountered in these types of professions might cause them to leave voluntarily. Those who are sufficiently intrinsically motivated to stay should therefore be treasured, together with their knowledge about the cases, about the functioning of the organisation, and about how to work together with the other organisations. As one respondent puts it “they are acquainted with the cases, they are acquainted with all those involved, so I don’t like to see them leave” (BA). A counsellor from the VK described a current situation where a valuable member of the police will soon retire:

*With the police, there is benevolence from both sides. The more you trust the person you need to call, the less you eventually think about the fact it [information sharing] might not be allowed. But when you hear, like now, in police zone X someone is retiring after 30 years, you think ‘oh no, who will replace them?’ and you have to explore and detect whether you can still do the same. (J)*

Our respondents, however, saw an emerging trend where people could stay less long in the profession than they used to, especially in the supporting services of the Flemish government (OCJ and SDJ). Again, the central personnel policies of the Flemish government take away the autonomy of the organisations to choose who can stay and get tenured. On top of that, the mentality of younger employees has changed, where it has become standard practice to change jobs more frequently, and the government supports this job rotation.

*I find that the system of the Flemish community doesn’t allow people to stay for long periods of time. We have been through many personnel shifts already! And it will happen again. There are two close to retirement, and one other is tenured, and all the others are contractual [not tenured] and will have to pass an exam. If they do not succeed someone else will take their place. Next year there will be a completely other team, no one will be tenured. That does not help at all. (BJ)*

*We had a counsellor who worked super well, had many capacities, did a fantastic job, but there was insecurity whether she could stay or not when the year ended. [...] And it's this insecurity of not being tenured that makes counsellors look for something else and leave. This is very regrettable. (BB)*

*Proposition:* Human resource practices that focus on retaining the members in the organisation for longer periods should improve the trustworthiness of these members (gap 2).

### 7.2.3 Internal process control

*Trust, but verify. ~ Ronald Reagan*

A question in network research is why individual organisations would take responsibility for their tasks in the network, and put effort in cooperating, when there are no real individual consequences to underperforming (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). In the judicial youth care chain, the cooperation happens between organisations that function completely autonomous from each other, and have no power to sanction or to control the working processes. As such, an organisation might lack the will to perform well, or might prioritise internal performance over external cooperation. Therefore, it is important that all organisations take self-responsibility for its own functioning. Several self-governance systems were mentioned by the respondents to increase the perception of the trustworthiness of the members of the organisations.

One example of such internal control mechanism in the care organisations (VK, OCJ, and SDJ), is that a referral to the prosecutor or an advice to a judge is **discussed at team level** within the organisation. This means a decision is not dependent on just one individual counsellor and is checked by the team. This ensures accidental misjudgements or personal feuds will be picked up by the team, and corrected before being transferred to another organisation. This check can refrain counsellors from letting personal motives play in their work, or to double-check for mistakes before finalising a referral or advice, improving their ability and integrity. In addition, when the trustor is aware of these internal control measures, the perception of the integrity of the counsellors will increase, as the following member of the VK asserts about the SDJ:

*Integrity for me also means that they work together in a team, and don't make decision all by themselves. And I believe that is going well, that they do have good teamwork. (AY)*

Another such mechanism is the **refutable debate** in the presence of a team leader, where the clients are invited for a discussion at the mandated facilities before they are referred to the OM.



Any misrepresentations from the side of the counsellor can be contested in this context. A counsellor of the SDJ said the following about the OCJ:

*No [members cannot do what they want], because when a case is transferred to court, at the OCJ there has to be first a refutable debate so the clients get to have their say. And the team leader is there as well. So imagine a counsellor has made up all sorts of things about, for example, the parents that do not follow certain agreements, and in that debate they can say this is not correct. I don't think any case can go to court without a good reason anymore. (AN)*

The internal control mechanisms need to be guarded strictly though, since they are not foolproof and could give a false impression of the lawfulness of certain actions. For example, before counsellors of the mandated facilities can give extensive information to the counsellors of the SDJ, the counsellor from the SDJ needs to have the agreement of the clients. When the SDJ goes to the mandated facilities, however, it was said that it is enough when they say they obtained agreement, they do not have to get this written down or proven in any way as illustrated below. In these cases, the SDJ counsellors can easily take advantage of the system and ask for information when this was not agreed upon by the client.

*Mostly they come by and ask if we can discuss the case for fifteen minutes. And then you just tell them what is in the file. When they ask whether they went to an orientation centre and they want to see that report, then they received permission from the parents for this. [...] No, I don't think we ask for that permission in written. If they ask for information, we don't ask for an official written document. (AT)*

The earlier described open communication strategy can also make sure that the internal control measures that improve trustworthiness become apparent to the other organisation. Certain managerial measures and controls are not necessarily known to the members of the trustor organisation. During personal contacts, these measures can be brought up, offering the trustor new insights in internal organisational structures relevant to the cooperation. This can offer new information increasing the positive evaluation of the counterpart, or even clear up misunderstandings about the working of the counterpart. One example is noticing that the members of the organisation are sometimes unreachable for no apparent reason, but then learning through interaction with a member of that organisation that every month on Monday these members take a training course to improve their professional competencies. This changes the available information on which their trustworthiness is evaluated. There are still cases in

which the trustor is not aware of certain trustworthiness increasing measures. Here, there is room for improving the perceived trustworthiness of the counsellors' advice by the judges.

*I heard that the counsellors are sometimes not present because they are in training that day. Or that the more experienced ones pass on their knowledge to the less experienced. And also the fact that there are team meetings among the counsellors, and that each advice is a team supported advice, adds to the trustworthiness of their information. (BO)*

*It's not clear to me whether everything is discussed at team level, or only when a counsellor asks for this. Then they could choose not to discuss certain cases. Maybe they work with random samples, or the head of the team decides which cases to discuss? I have no idea. (AQ)*

**Proposition:** Internal control processes assure the trustee to refrain from untrustworthy behaviour (gap 2).

#### 7.2.4 Workload

*To do two things at once is to do neither.*

A high workload, a problematic case backlog, high administrative burden, and a lack of means and political support are often heard complaints concerning the judicial system as a whole (Depré & Hondeghe, 2000). An organisation where there is a lot of work pressure can cause untrustworthy behaviour from the members of that organisation, irrespective of the possible trustworthy nature of the individuals. Also in the judicial youth care chain there is a realisation that the own workload and that of the other organisations is quite substantial. There is also the feeling that the workload increased in recent years, due to the reorganisation of 2014 bringing about an increased administrative load and a recent increase in cases of alarming situations. A high workload had a negative effect on the perception of the ability of the other since there is a feeling that when one needs to depend on a person from the other organisation, they might not have had the time to do a good enough job, as the following public prosecutor and judge are aware of:

*The work pressure, the workload, has an influence on the way tasks are executed. It will definitely have an influence, and when more staff and resources are available, everyone can work more comfortable. [...] You can expect that when the work pressure decreases you will be able to work more focused, more attentively, and more precise, and this will affect trust. (D)*

*When there is not enough staff to cover the workload I worry whether everything will be fine. I think that's really important for trust in the functioning. (F)*

Another consequence of the heavy workload is that there is less time for communication and personal contact, which can affect the perception of the benevolence of the other, but also inhibit gathering more information for a clearer picture of the other's trustworthiness, for the trustor to share their expectations, and for the trustee to share their limitations. One solution to this is the OM designating the criminologist to deal with all the personal communication with the other organisation, which can increase the trustworthiness of the OM: "Where the cooperation works very well is with the criminologists of the OM, that is really an added value (AR)".

The negative effect of the high workload could, however, be compensated for through the presence of extremely motivated individuals in these organisations. The limitation of the members' abilities was adjusted for by the displayed extra effort not to let a heavy workload lead to neglect of any tasks. The following judge remembers this was the case when previously working at the OM:

*I have worked at the OM myself as part of my internship, for one and a half years. Then I have noticed that you constantly need to step on the gas to manage your cases. There is definitely not an over-capacity of magistrates at the OM at this time. But they do keep on pushing to be able to do their tasks properly. [...] Thanks to their work ethic and their passion. (BI)*

*Proposition:* A high workload of the trustee can decrease trustworthy behaviour, because time pressure obstructs the performing (gap 2). This is partly countered by the high integrity of the members, which prevents them from allowing negligence in the dealing with the cases.

### 7.3 Interorganisational characteristics

The second set of factors extracted after analysis of the interviews comprises the interorganisational principles that govern the interactions between the organisations of the judicial youth care. This suggests that to be perceived as trustworthy is not the sole responsibility of the individual within the organisation, or of the organisation in the network, but also of the rules applied to the interactions between the organisations. The four factors are stipulation of a shared goal, separation of tasks, continuity, and proximity. Next, the factors are

described one by one, in descending order of number of references about a certain factor as presented in Table 21.

*Table 21 Number of references per sub-category of interorganisational inputs*

Node	# sources	# references
Shared goal	36	127
Separation of duties	40	112
Continuity	30	61
Proximity	19	38

### 7.3.1 Stipulation of a shared goal

*Get everyone rowing in the same direction.*

Among all members involved in judicial youth care, there is a strong awareness that everyone works towards one shared goal: protecting minors who find themselves in alarming situations. Alarming situations include, for example, neglected or abused children, children with insurgent behaviour, or gang membership of a minor. Next to protecting minors, the different organisations do have other goals, such as the judges who also dictate societal values, however, protecting the minors was said to be the primary concern. The members of the different organisations are “much attuned to each other because of the goal of installing care for a certain minor” (AU).

*I believe the expectation is that we are all involved in the same philosophy and that for everyone the interest of the child is priority. And this should be the underlying principle for all decisions, in files as well as in the cooperation; this has to be the critical factor. (C)*

This goal congruence is underlined by mandating each actor in the chain of judicial youth care by the same legislative decree on integrated youth care (IYC), which coordinates the actions of the different actors towards this shared goal. It creates a set of shared values and a shared language among the cooperating organisations. The only exception among the organisations involved in the judicial decision-making process is the youth police, which is not coordinated by the IYC decree, and which is felt as a missed opportunity for the police. It was also acknowledged that the difference in approaches to youth care were still apparent in certain situations, especially between the actors linked closely with the voluntary youth care and those without these links. This refrains certain actors from closely cooperating with the other actors,

or lowers their perception of the trustworthiness of the others. However, these differences are felt more between the judicial youth care and the voluntary youth care providers. The following judge describes such difference in approach between the court and the SDJ:

*There is a different approach between a care giver and someone from the judicial system. I have an example on this, of a case where a boy was under court surveillance. [...] And every year the SDJ asks to close the case because the boy does not have any problems. [...] And I say surveillance is still necessary, because the father is practically a mobster. I said: "Doesn't that bother you?" They said: "If he takes good care of his children, than there is no longer an issue for us." So yeah, there is a tension field. (BA)*

There are still some organisational relations where the congruence of values and norms is not that strong. Especially towards the VK there is some concern about in how far they share the values of cooperation and openness that is present in the rest of the chain, which was reflected in the lowest score of 3,63 on the benevolence scale (see Chapter 6). Also towards the mandated facilities there is less the feeling that they are working for the same goal. Of course, between the organisations there can still be a tension in how a minor is best protected. The care organisations might be more inclined to solve the problems within a family through deliberation, even when the threat to the child comes from within the family, while the magistrates and police might be more inclined to protect the child by removing them immediately from the threat.

*Cooperation with the magistrates is varying, I find. It's harder than it used to be. Also a number of new, younger magistrates who are very on the legal part, which is their task in fact. They think in terms of criminal law and investigations, and the care part is more subsidiary to that. (AR)*

*You do notice that in meetings with the VK and the OM, with the magistrates there, that the VK had a different train of thought than us, the police. We had a small discussion about this, that the police and OM don't only work repressive. That we are certainly there to try and get care delivered, and to help the children, not just to tackle a momentary situation. But apparently they can't agree with that. (AG)*

**Proposition:** Defining a shared goal between the organisations increases the trustworthy behaviour of the participants, through value congruence and cooperation, closing gap 2.

### 7.3.2 Separation of duties

A typical characteristic of judicial decision-making is that the tasks of investigation and adjudication are not devoted to one single person or a single organisation. To protect citizens against accidental errors or even deliberate harm from the judicial power, many checks and balances are incorporated in the system. In the judicial youth care, this is also the case. Each party has been assigned a distinct task to pursue the common goal, which they help accomplish by contributing their part to the expertise required for protecting a child (as laid out in Chapter 3). From the interviews, it became clear that the strict segregation of duties has a strong impact on the perceived trustworthiness. It was also clear that where the separation of the duties is not well organised friction could occur between the organisations. This strict separation of duties has three important consequences: autonomy of each organisation, interdependency between the organisations, and clarity of roles and responsibilities. These are described in more detail below.

#### 7.3.2.1 Autonomy

*The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them.*

*~ Ernest Hemingway*

Between each of the organisations there is almost absolute autonomy in the way they organise themselves and the way they execute the tasks. There is no hierarchical structure between the six organisations. In a way, there is a hierarchy between the OM and the police, with the former giving tasks to the latter, and between the juvenile judge and the SDJ, again with the former enquiring a task from the latter. However, the commanding party cannot choose which person executes the tasks, how many resources will be devoted to the task execution, when the task should be executed, etc. In addition, the respondents did not experience this as a real hierarchical relationship, describing themselves more as “equals” in the process, as this counsellor of the SDJ did:

*The juvenile judge cannot in any way, or may not in any way, under no circumstances tell the counsellor “you should give me this advice”. And the juvenile judge can, may, take a completely different decision than what we propose. Because a judge also hears the juvenile lawyer, also hears the parents...*  
(AU)

This lack of control over the other organisation means there is no possibility to correct the behaviour to the liking of the trustor. It could be expected that this sustains a gap between the

expectations of the trustor and the behaviour of the trustee. It seems, however, that this autonomy actually has a positive effect on the perception of the trustworthiness of the other. The lack of control over the other could have the effect that the trustees take more responsibility over their actions, and can contain a sense of integrity and pride over their work.

*Everyone performs their own task in good conscience and feels responsible for their task, to do it autonomously. [...] You need to trust the SDJ a lot, they are the eyes and the ears, the right-hand of the judge. You need to trust their information, and base your decision on this. But in the end the judge is still responsible for the decision. (BO)*

Sometimes, however, some organisations do try to steer other organisations into the direction they prefer. However, the autonomy forces the parties to come to agreements on how the other should operate through mutual negotiation. When the judges, for example, do not agree with a certain practice of the SDJ, they can bring this up with the superior of the SDJ, and only by mutual agreement can things be considered for change.

*It happened that we, me and my colleague, we had remarks about the functioning of a certain counsellor, and then this was discussed with the team leader, who picked it up with the counsellor. And in this case this really led to an improvement. (BN)*

One negative effect of the autonomy is that there are little control mechanisms left to control the outcomes or behaviour of the other organisation. This means trust is not always based on rational considerations, but rather on a limitation of power leading up to *forced* trust, and trust as a coping mechanism rather than a logical consequence of the cooperation. Trust based on good perceptions of the trustworthiness is likely to be more durable than forced trust. A counsellor of the OCJ describes such situation:

*There have been periods where we felt with certain prosecutors that they did not take us seriously. And then you feel powerless, you also feel like falling short towards the families. (AL)*

*Proposition:* Autonomy makes the counterpart take responsibility for their actions (gap 2), and promotes the need for making mutual agreements which all parties agree upon (gap 3).

*I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine.*

The clear task division creates another important feature of this network, namely that each organisation is dependent on the work and on the goodwill of the other organisation. Together with the earlier factor of autonomy, the interdependence can ensure a power balance between organisations. Cooperating with the partners is then required to accomplish the common goal. They could “sit on their island, but when you need something for yourself, then you won't be able to get it either” (BB) as one judge puts it. All the organisations directly in contact with each other experience bilateral interdependency (see Figure 9 in Chapter 3), in the sense that at one point in the handling of the cases they are directly dependent on the work of the other, without the possibility to take over the task by themselves. Moreover, they cannot choose to cooperate with another organisation, since there is only one organisation who has the mandate to perform this task in a certain district. All this makes for a stable and durable interdependency, which was also acknowledged by the respondents.

*There is no other way than to cooperate with each other. We are truly dependent of one another, we need each other. Even though we might sometimes not agree or have a different opinion in an individual case, they need us and we need them. That's why we will try our best to keep the cooperation optimal and to always continue to engage in dialogue. (AM)*

This interdependency installs a *quid pro quo* situation: an expectation that trustworthy behaviour will be reciprocated in future interactions. As such untrustworthy behaviour will pose long-term disadvantages by rendering future cooperation more difficult and therefore impeding the own work. The egalitarian relationship creates a good ground for information exchange, cooperation, and openness, without fearing any punitive consequences of the cooperating partners. So working together closely and being open is promoted by these factors, as there are little consequences to being too open and too cooperative. A partner will act more reliable when they expect something in return in the future, based on reciprocity. For example, the first line help is less keen than the mandated facilities on giving information to the public prosecutor, although they have the same barriers of confidentiality. First-line help does not need anything back from the public prosecutor in the future, while the mandated facilities and public prosecutors are mutually dependent on each other.

*Proposition:* A balanced interdependency ensures that each party will behave their best, to ensure cooperation will be reciprocated in future interactions (gap 2).



### 7.3.2.3 Clarity of roles and responsibilities

*Good agreements make good friends.*

The decree on IYC, stipulating the separate tasks and responsibilities of each actor, was designed to streamline and better coordinate the youth care in Flanders. This can improve the trustworthiness because it shows the trustor what can be expected of the trustee, and gives the trustee a clear overview of what tasks should be focused on. Not only the decree can help, but also deontological codes of the organisation or of the whole network can inform members of how they are expected to behave in the cooperation.

*I'm not sure whether it is due to the decree, but the document the OCJ uses to refer a societal need or urgent case to the OM has a certain template, which maybe forces them more than before to style the report in a certain way. I have noticed that now from the beginning of a case there is a concrete problem statement, which wasn't always the case before. [...] I find this information has improved. (BB&BC)*

However, many issues remain, which cause difficulties in the interactions between the members of the organisations. A problem that can occur in complex networks like the justice system is that the division of tasks is not that clearly defined. For some tasks, there is a certain overlap, and for others it is unclear which organisation should take the responsibility. In addition, for certain grey areas in the decree, it is not clear whether one organisation can call upon the other organisation for a task or whether this is prohibited. The importance of a clear task division is that the expectations one organisation has towards the other are clear, so there are less chances for friction. Another area where the responsibilities are not yet clearly carved out is everything to do with professional confidentiality. The interpretation of when the conditions for breaking the secrecy are met differs between the organisations, causing friction between the organisations.

*When the task division is clear between the different actors, only then will we know what can and what cannot be said during meetings. Now it is often not clear between care givers and magistrates, which creates uncertainty. Once the role division is clear there will be more openness and can the cooperation run more smoothly. (BD)*

*Yes, it's a very grey area. And this is not easy, when there are frustrations it usually comes down to this. Information that couldn't be shared but in fact should have been shared. Nobody will take that risk, which I can somewhat understand. But I am also frustrated sometimes, knowing that if we had known certain things we could have done this or that, if only we were aware of it. (AU)*

**Proposition:** Clear stipulation and separation of the tasks between the organisations makes clear what is expected from the trustee (gap 3) and increases the interdependency (gap 2).

### 7.3.3 Continuity

*The proof of the pudding is in the eating.*

The judicial youth care chain in Flanders knows a long history of cooperation between several partners for achieving the common goal of child protection. For example, the juvenile judges are responsible for assigning judicial youth care since 1965, and they can count on the support from the counsellors of the SDJ since 1985 (and even before the SDJ existed, there were counsellors in the court). At the same time, there is the prospect of a long-term continuation of the cooperation, since they are legally bound to work together. This durable character of the cooperation has several benefits to the level of trustworthiness present and perceived in the network. On the one hand, trustors can rely on the past to inform for future interactions, offering information on which to base an evaluation of the trustworthiness of a trustee. As such, the gap between the perception of the trustworthiness and the actual behaviour of the trustee can decrease by removing bias in the perception.

*Of course, counsellors with whom you work together more often you know better, and this has in turn an influence on your trust. Usually for better, sometimes maybe for worse. (BI)*

On the other hand, the prospect of recurring interactions motivates a partner to refrain from any behaviour that makes them look bad, or causes contempt from the trustor. This shadow of the future also stimulates members to invest time in the sustainability of the cooperation, and offers the opportunity to search for long-term solutions and an accumulation of these solutions.

*Of course, we have a long-standing tradition of cooperation within judicial youth care, of having to work together. I can imagine that those who are not used to that will have it a lot harder, especially in the beginning. While we have a cooperation since several years, where we also had to find the best ways of cooperating. (AM)*

*It has advantages to be in the sector for a long time. You know the people [...], you can more easily enter a place without needing to make a formal agreement first. And you can gain from that. (AV)*

*Proposition:* The continuity of the alliance creates many past experiences, offering the trustee more information to base their perceptions on, removing part of the perception bias (gap 1) and gives the trustor more information on the expectations of the trustor (gap 3).

*Proposition:* The continuity offers a prospect of recurring interaction, refraining the trustee from acting in an untrustworthy manner (gap 2).

#### 7.3.4 Interorganisational proximity

*Out of sight, out of mind.*

The interorganisational proximity is a constitutional element between the organisations, where **the physical proximity** between the organisations is meant. This aspect is partly manageable, since, for example, formerly the SDJ was housed inside the courthouse, while now it resides in a separate building, which can be at a distance from each other. Now, at least in the sampled embedded cases, the SDJ is housed inside the same building as the OCJ, often on the same or on adjacent floors, sharing a coffee machine and a canteen. The OM and the juvenile court still reside in the same building: the general courthouse. The architecture of the buildings, the placement of the separate departments within one building, or the scale of the organisation can determine whether members of both organisations easily seek personal contact with each other or not, which can in turn affect perceived trustworthiness. For example, one of the two mandated facilities, the OCJ, is housed in the same building as the SDJ, while the other mandated facility, the VK, is housed in another building. Looking back at the trustworthiness scores in Chapter 6, within the sample the SDJ perceives the OCJ more trustworthy than the VK, and likewise the SDJ is perceived more trustworthy by the OCJ than by the VK, despite the fact that they are both mandated facilities with a similar task. This could be due to the shared origins and shared administrative governance (VK is a non-profit, while OCJ and SDJ are governmental organisations). However, one of the SDJ counsellors and a secretary at the OM reported that the physical proximity could also affect how well they work together:

*The fact that I just pop into their office when I receive a casefile from the OCJ, I can easily ask: “do you have the referral to the OM, can I get it?” It makes the cooperation much more practical than with the VK, they work in another service, with another historical background. I also hear from colleagues from the OCJ that the way they work with the VK is still different. Even though they are both mandated facilities with the same functioning, there remains a large difference. (R)*

*Here, people run into each other once in a while, so I think the distance, the real physical distance, can bring about a form of distrust. The closer people work together they will get to know each other, respect each other more, more trust. If all walls would be broken down, so to speak, and everyone worked closer together, I think there would be a different way of looking at each other. (B)*

Another factor that can determine the proximity between members of the organisation is the **scale** on which the organisations are organised. In the sample, districts of different sizes were included, but this factor did not come up as influential by the respondents. This is possibly because the larger district had taken counter measures to deal with the larger scale, such as making sure only certain counsellors deal with certain juvenile judges, instead of with all juvenile judges. The scale could affect, however, the informality between the actors, as one counsellor of the SDJ who had the experience of working in both a larger and a smaller district noticed.

*The communication here is much more direct [than in a larger district]. It is customary that the judges call us and contact us fast. In [the larger district] this was not the case. Here, we are also not more than 100 meters apart. It's small things like that, but they do play a role. The custom in the larger district was to first call the registrar while here you call the judge, because they want you to contact them, there they wanted you to contact the registrar, and this created a distance. (Q)*

**Proposition:** Physical proximity between organisations in a network can improve the perception of the trustworthiness by creating more opportunities for personal contact and communication, which in turn has an important influence on closing the trustworthiness gap.

*Proposition:* Proximity between the organisations increases the potential for personal and informal contact between the members of the organisation, reinforcing the effect of those input factors.

#### 7.4 Chapter summary and discussion

In this chapter, the interviews were used to better understand which context-specific organisational and interorganisational inputs influenced the perception of trustworthiness in the case of the judicial youth care chain. The different organisational factors that were identified are (1) the communication strategy, (2) personnel composition, (3) internal process control, and (4) the workload. The interorganisational factors that were identified are (1) the stipulations of a shared goal, (2) the separation of duties, (3) continuity, and (4) proximity. While these characteristics were not installed to improve trust between the organisations in the chain, they do directly affect the perception of the trustworthiness of the members of the organisations. This focus on institutional origins of trust is an addition to the focus on the interpersonal, micro level focus, something Bachmann & Inkpen (2011) plead for.

The first organisational factor, the **communication strategy**, entails that allowing and encouraging frequent personal contact with and open communication policy will offer opportunities for the perception of the trustworthiness to be adjusted, removing existing bias. This will be positive if indeed the intentions and behaviours of the trustee are better than how they were initially perceived. It also allows for better understanding the working procedures and limitations of the trustee, and for adjusting certain unrealistic expectations of the trustor towards the trustee. Nohria & Eccles (1992) found that indeed the means of contact play a role, where face-to-face communication is the most effective way for facilitating trust. Many others found a connection between personal contact and trust, where the familiarity and relational dimension that emerge between two individuals gives an advantage to the strength of the tie and the probability of cooperating in the future (Gausdal, 2012) and leads to trust or distrust in collaboration (Bachmann, 2003; Hudson et al., 1999). Emotion enters into the relationship between the parties, because frequent, long-term interaction leads to the formation of attachment based on reciprocated interpersonal care and concern (McAllister, 1995). Personal experiences between people can make the interaction smoother, because a stronger bond and greater trust develops. It makes a person seem more real and human, and thus more trustworthy (Abrams et al., 2003). Six (2005) likewise found, in a context of consultancy firms, that many opportunities for informal contact contributes to trust building. Moreover, personal experiences with others increase the amount of information available to assess another's abilities, intentions, and behaviours within the relationship (Abrams et al., 2003). Although the information about

the other can also be negative based on bad previous experiences, the literature alludes to the fact that mere exposure to something typically leads to increased feelings of liking and therefore the link between communication frequency and trust is generally positive (Becerra & Gupta, 2003). This could also be explained by the fact that the more frequent personal contact there is, the greater the chance that the expectations gap decreases, since there are more opportunities for communication. Through communication one can get to know the other organisation as well, which has earlier been found to be an important antecedent of trustworthiness by Gil-Garcia et al. (2010). It provides a better sense of the complexity of the other organisation, and creates mutual respect and good relationships among participants. Communication increases the opportunity to assess the other participant's trustworthiness (Ostrom, 1998). These interactions outside of the digital arena offer more opportunities for building trust, through the increase of relational input next to the reliance on depersonalised institutional factors (Pavlou, 2002). Nilsson & Mattes (2015) found that while fragile forms of trust can be created across physical distance, this is rarely the case for resilient trust. As the interaction amongst the collaborators increases actors are able to assess the other's intentions and draw inferences about the trustworthiness for forecasting future behaviour (R. M. Kramer, 2010). It was also found that full transparency of governments or private organisations does not automatically lead to more trust in these institutions (Jonkers, 2013; Opraus & Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012). Transparency, can lead to a negative perception compared to non-disclosure because faults and shortcomings become more apparent.

The second organisational factor, the **personnel management**, entails that an organisation should attract, maintain, and retain trustworthy individuals within their organisation. The goal of the judicial youth care, together with the demanding job requirements, caused for a self-selection of trustworthy individuals, but the challenge of the organisations is to correctly inaugurate and train their members, and to make sure the trustworthy individuals do not exit the organisation due to inflexible HR-procedures and the lack of (financial and emotional) extrinsic motivators. As such, correct personnel management has the power to incite trustworthy behaviour from their personnel, which should decrease the gap between what the trustor expects and how the trustee acts (gap 2), given that both trustor and trustee have the same beliefs about how a trustworthy individual should act. Other found that ongoing organisational changes (Kiefer, 2005) and the extent to and the length in which an organisation uses temporary workers (George, 2003) are negatively related to trust in organisations.

The third organisational factor, the **internal process control**, entails installing control mechanisms inside the organisation so that the output created by the organisation is of

sufficient quality, and should prevent members of the organisation to act in an untrustworthy manner. This will decrease gap 2 by improving how trustees behave, but can also close gap one when the trustor becomes aware of the internal measures of the organisation, improving their perception of the trustworthiness. This can be reinforced by frequent personal contact where such measures can be mentioned. Williamson (1985) has argued the case for formalised governance structures and safeguards to control for opportunism and deceit. On the other hand, Mayer et al. (1995) argued that a strong organisational control system could inhibit the development of trust, because a trustee's actions may be interpreted as responses to that control rather than signs of trustworthiness.

The fourth and last organisational factor, the **workload** within the organisation, can compromise the behaviour of the members of the organisation, increasing gap 2 due to the resulting untrustworthy behaviour, and can induce the perception that the members will behave untrustworthy by the trustor, increasing the trustworthiness gap. The relation between workload/work pressure and trustworthiness or trust seems not to have been researched yet. Besides the workload of the trustee, it can be assumed that workload of the trustor organisation could also have an important impact on the trust this trustor has, since this could force trust from their side. When people are forced to take risks not based on positive expectations but based on time pressures put on them, it might seem like there is trust present, while there is actually not. In an environment where one does not have the time to double check the other's work with other sources due to a lack of time, there can exist a rather dangerous situation. The trustor is then *forced* to take risks while this is not based on positive expectations of the other. This way mistakes or purposeful abuse could find its way into the processes. It might be better for the performance of a network when organisations actually have the time to distrust one another, making sure the checks and balances system can be fully benefited from. This part was not covered in the interviews but could be interesting to look into more.

The first interorganisational factor, the **stipulation of a shared goal**, ensures everyone is working towards the same goal and everyone benefits from helping others out to reach this goal. This can induce benevolent behaviour, closing gap 2. Working towards the same goal installs value identification, which increases the chances that everyone has the same expectations about how a person in the chain should act, decreasing gap 3. Possibly, there is an interaction with the factor of 'personnel management' since people with similar values are attracted to the organisations with the same shared goal. Other have found that a shared goal acts as a normative, enduring and fundamental behavioural guide for the members of the partnership (Kashyap & Sivadas, 2012). Shared goals are an important relational resource and also a

necessary condition to facilitate meaningful communication between parties in exchange relationships (Chow & Chan, 2008). Morgan & Hunt (1994) argue that shared goals are a major driving force that facilitates the development of interorganisational trust and relationship commitment, by creating shared values and a shared language between the organisations. They define shared values as the “extent to which partners have beliefs in common about what behaviours, goals, and policies are important or unimportant, appropriate or inappropriate, and right or wrong” (Morgan & Hunt, 1994, p. 25). Abrams et al. (2003) argue that it is important for knowledge sharing networks to establish and ensure a shared vision and language (see also Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). However, in the extreme case, being exposed to the same institutional environment could lead to institutional isomorphism, where all actors behave in a similar manner (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

The second interorganisational factor, the **separation of duties**, where each organisation has a clear task that is distinctive to the tasks of the other organisations, causes in the judicial youth care chain a high level of autonomy for the organisations, high interdependency between the organisations, and clarity of the roles and responsibilities for everyone. The high level of autonomy gives the trustee organisation the change to perform well independent of control mechanisms imposed by the trustee. This forced initial trust increases the chances for a positive experience with the trustee can occur without control being exercised over the conditions of the trustee. It seems that power balance is beneficial to trust creation, since otherwise, for the less dependent partner, having relative power over its weaker partner makes it likely this power will be used to achieve the partner's cooperation and to obtain valuable outcomes. In a business context it has been found that the stronger firm has little structural motivation to identify with or become attached to the weaker partner (Geyskens et al., 1996). For the more dependent party, its fear of exploitation reduces its satisfaction with the relationship (Anderson & Narus, 1984) and consequently also its motivation to continue the relationship for affective reasons (Anderson & Weitz, 1989).

The third interorganisational factor, the **continuity** of the collaboration, creates a collection of past experiences which offer additional information to the trustor on the trustworthiness of the trustee. This can decrease existing bias between the actual behaviour and the perception (gap 1). Continuity also creates a prospect of long-term future cooperation, making a party refrain from opportunistic behaviour, since this can jeopardise the cooperation. Together with the balanced interdependence, this means each party will try to stay on the good side of the others, closing gap 2. Moreover, gap 3 can also shrink because with more experience each party gets more informed about each other's possibilities and expectations. Continuity can thus be a big



advantage to cooperation, and a current concern for many practitioners is how to build trust in networks that only exist for a brief period of time requiring the realisation of swift trust (Meyerson et al., 1996). This concern is based on the knowledge that trust develops gradually and needs repeated interactions (Gulati, 1995; Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). While trust can be seen as a determinant of continuation (Anderson & Weitz, 1989) in the judicial youth care chain the continuity between the collaborating partners is legally ensured. Other than is the case for most private sector alliances, there is no possibility for either partners to circumvent the other partner for its tasks since there are no competitors present to take the other's place. Therefore, in this case the question can be turned around to see whether involuntary continuation of a cooperation has any impact on the perception of the trustworthiness of the cooperating partners. Forced continuation can cause conflict escalation between the partners, without a way out of the conflict, which can have detrimental effects on the cooperation at hand. Earlier scholars have also referred to the effects of past experiences as the *shadow of the past* informing current interactions (Poppo et al., 2008). Parties choose to cooperate in value-sharing activities that are difficult to specify contractually, such as sharing private information or tacit knowledge, because "they have credible assurances that they will be rewarded for them" (Dyer & Singh, 1998, p. 671). Gulati (1995, p. 92) explains, "the idea of trust is based on the premise that through ongoing interaction, firms learn about each other and develop trust around norms of equity". Moreover, ongoing interaction sanctions negative behaviour, and in doing so forms a credible basis for developing mutual expectations (Larson, 1992). The shadow of the past offers information on the trustworthiness of the members of the partner organisation, enabling the trustor to move from a neutral or distrusting position to a trusting one, granted that the experiences are indeed positive. Zajonc (1968) showed that people were more likely to have a more positive attitude towards objects when they were exposed to it frequently than if they were not. This was termed the mere-exposure effect. In addition, the future prospect has been appropriately called *shadow of the future* by earlier scholars (Axelrod, 2006; Poppo et al., 2008). Cooperative assurances are built through reciprocal acts and depend critically upon a significantly extended time horizon of future exchange. Without a window of continuity, short-term gains would derail trust (Poppo et al., 2008). As such, partners can promote cooperative behaviour with their counterpart by creating more durable forms of interactions (Axelrod, 2006). Any restructuring should be accompanied by sufficient information sharing, but also by the knowledge that things need time to settle, and there should be a buffer for the time it takes for these things to settle. Legislators should consider this and not make rash decisions on revising the legislation when things have not settled down yet. While permanency of the alliance

between partners aids the probability of personal interaction and relational trust to emerge, there must be sufficient room for **personal contact** between the boundary spanners to benefit from the durability.

The fourth, and last, interorganisational factor, the **proximity** between the organisations, affects the trustworthiness of the others by creating more opportunities for personal contact and communication, reinforcing the effects of those inputs. Both the physical proximity of the buildings of departments in which the members reside, as the proximity caused by the scale of the departments, play a role. Other research found that trust is more likely to occur and to be prevalent when actors have the spatial capability for personal, direct interaction, and that embeddedness and proximity in a network lead to an increase of trust between network partners (Gössling, 2004; Kraut et al., 1990). Nilsson & Mattes (2015) confirm the importance of direct social exchange in the creation of more resilient trust, particularly the speed at which such trust can be created and primarily is done when actors are (at least temporarily) collocated. When this is not the case, more fragile forms of trust will only be able to emerge.

To summarize, this resulted in the formulation of the following propositions:

- Meetings between the organisations offer an opportunity to share the expectations that the counter organisation holds (gap 3).
- Supporting personal encounters with members of an organisation can remove bias between the manifestation and the perception of the behaviour (gap 1), and adding an informal dimension to the personal encounters will enforce this effect.
- Providing feedback is a manifestation of benevolent behaviour and removes some bias in the perception (gap 1 & 2).
- During personal contact agreements can emerge which create guidelines for the trustee about what is expected from them by the trustor (gap 3).
- Open communication can remove bias from the perception by clearing out misinterpretations of behaviour (gap 1).
- A shared goal with high social stakes increases the integrity of the participants, both through internal motivation and self-selection of trustworthy members (gap 2).
- Inauguration, training, and specialisation ensure that the actual intentions and behaviour of the members remain trustworthy (gap 2).
- Human resource practices that focus on retaining the members in the organisation for longer periods should improve the trustworthiness of these members (gap 2).

- Internal control processes assure the trustee to refrain from untrustworthy behaviour (gap 2).
- A high workload of the trustee can decrease trustworthy behaviour, because time pressure obstructs the performing (gap 2). This is partly countered by the high integrity of the members, which prevents them from allowing negligence in the dealing with the cases.
- Defining a shared goal between the organisations increases the trustworthy behaviour of the participants, through value congruence and cooperation, closing gap 2.
- Autonomy makes the counterpart take responsibility for their actions (gap 2), and promotes the need for making mutual agreements which all parties agree upon (gap 3).
- A balanced interdependency ensures that each party will behave their best, to ensure cooperation will be reciprocated in future interactions (gap 2).
- Clear stipulation and separation of the tasks between the organisations makes clear what is expected from the trustee (gap 3) and increases the interdependency (gap 2).
- The continuity of the alliance creates many past experiences, offering the trustee more information to base their perceptions on, removing part of the perception bias (gap 1) and gives the trustor more information on the expectations of the trustor (gap 3).
- The continuity offers a prospect of recurring interaction, refraining the trustee from acting in an untrustworthy manner (gap 2).
- Physical proximity between organisations in a network can improve the perception of the trustworthiness by creating more opportunities for personal contact and communication, which in turn has an important influence on closing the trustworthiness gap.
- Proximity between the organisations increases the potential for personal and informal contact between the members of the organisation, reinforcing the effect of those input factors.

It can be concluded that most of the factors identified in the judicial context are thus also found in other contexts by other researchers as having an effect on the perception of the trustworthiness of the counterpart. However, showing the mechanisms through which these factors could have an effect by closing the gaps adds a new perspective to this. It is also important to note that the combined presence of several factors have a reinforcing effect on each other, causing the high levels of perceived trustworthiness in the judicial youth care chain.

The organisations or the overarching administration of the alliance can control certain factors themselves. For example, the high turnover or the consequences of the high turnover can be

anticipated on. The selection of the right persons on the right job could be controlled. The workload can be spread so that there is more time left for checking each other's work, and for communication and personal contact. In addition, when there seems to be too much trust between certain individuals from different organisations that it becomes dysfunctional, there can be an adjustment of certain factors, such as the proximity of two organisations that should in fact keep reservations towards each other when it comes to confidential information.

Ultimately, the framework of Dietz could offer a good starting point, however, not all factors hypothesised by Dietz emerged from the data. For example, culture was not put forward by the respondents as a decisive factor for trustworthiness to be perceived. This is remarkably, because a large difference in the cultures from the judicial parties and the care parties can be expected. While the judicial members are more trained to follow legal rules, the care organisations will be taught to be more flexible.

## Chapter 8 Trust: Willingness to exchange information

In Chapter 6, it was established there are high levels of perceived trustworthiness in the judicial youth care chain, it was identified what trustworthiness entails in this case, and it was discovered how the perception of trustworthiness was influenced by an interplay of different existing gaps. These gaps contribute to a departure of the perception of the trustworthiness from the existing expectations of the trustor. A framework was developed to support the implementation of a gap-analysis in an interorganisational setting, to check where the gaps are present and to help understand how these gaps could be reduced. Chapter 7 looked at which context-specific characteristics of the judicial youth care chain have an effect on the perception of the trustworthiness, categorised in organisational and interorganisational inputs. The mechanisms through which these inputs affect the perception were also studied, by examining which of the gaps are affected by the different inputs.

In the universal trust process proposed by Dietz (2011) – which functions as a guidance for this exploration – the inputs precede the trustworthiness, which in turn precedes trust. In this case, trust is operationalised as the willingness to share information, which is the main interdependency between the involved organisations. This chapter therefore proceeds in the trust process by examining the actual willingness to share information and how this is influenced by the earlier examined perception of the trustworthiness (see Figure 28). This will offer an answer to the fourth research question: What is the impact of perceived trustworthiness on the willingness to exchange mandatory, optional, or prohibited information? For answering this research question, data from both data collection methods are applied, namely the survey and the interview data, to get a broad grasp on this step in the trust process. In this chapter, first, the levels of trust are evaluated, looking also at the variation between trustor and trustee organisations, then, the correlation between trustworthiness and trust is analysed based on the survey data, and lastly, this link and the mechanisms behind it are further explored by analysing the interview data, where interesting patterns emerge. The chapter is concluded with a section providing a summary of the findings and a discussion of the results in light of existing research.

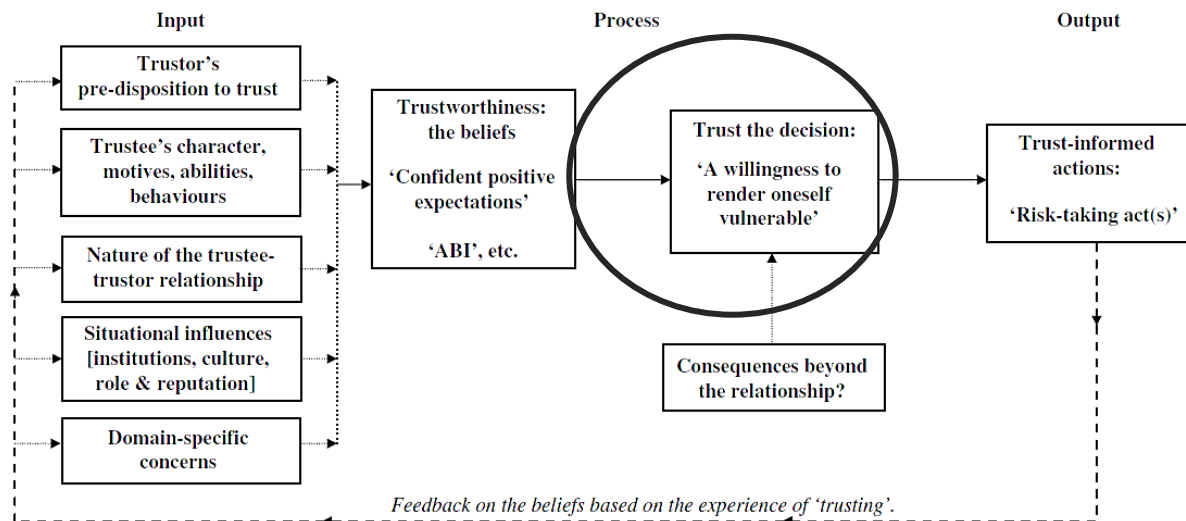


Figure 28 The universal trust process (Dietz, 2011), indicating what is explored in this chapter

### 8.1 The willingness to exchange information

Exchanging information has two aspects to it: the provision of information by the holder of the information and the acceptance of the information by the receiver of the information. As such, during the exchange of information, one party provides and one party accepts information, and both parties involved are both trustor and a trustee at the same time (see Figure 29). The holder of the information needs to trust the receiver of the information before being willing to disclose the information, and needs to be trusted by the receiver of the information for them to accept the information and take it at face value. The receiver of the information needs to be trusted by the sender before the information will be passed on to them, and they need to trust the person or organisation sending the information to actually give credence to the piece of information they just received. In a personal information exchange, the situation can become even more complex because often both parties provide and receive information at the same time. Both aspects of providing and accepting information will be discussed separately below, describing the levels of trust regarding information sharing deducted from the survey sample.

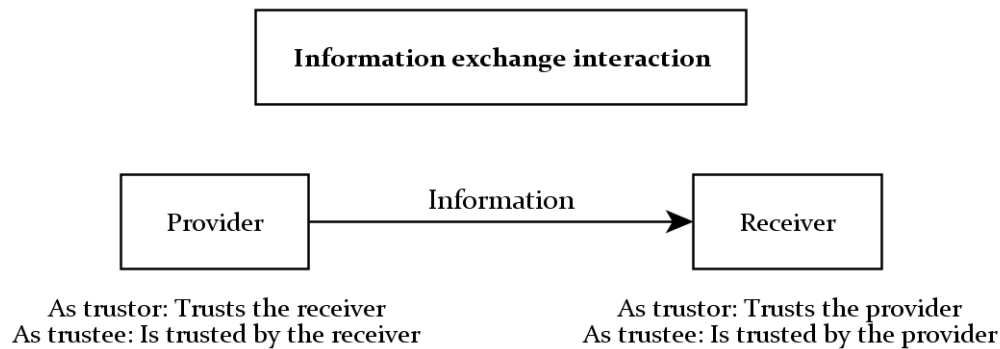


Figure 29 During information exchange, the provider and receiver of the information are both trustor and trustee at the same time

**Providing information** is accompanied by certain risks. When an trustor  $A_i$  from organisation A in the judicial youth care chain sends information to organisation B within the same chain, a vulnerability emerges in the sense that  $A_i$  cannot further control what organisation B does with the information, resulting in uncertain situations. Within organisation B, the information might not reach the targeted member of that organisation ( $B_i$ ) due to internal organisational complications of organisation B. When the information does reach  $B_i$ , they might misinterpret the information or not value it correctly, and as a result ignore or misuse it further down the decision making process. Moreover, the information, and therefore  $A_i$ , becomes vulnerable to being criticised by  $B_i$  for incorrectness or incompleteness, or other perceived shortcomings of the information. There is also a time cost associated with the act of providing information. To minimise their own vulnerability  $A_i$  will estimate the potential costs of disclosing any information to organisation B, and might adjust its behaviour to the estimated risks of this interaction, resulting in an increased or decreased willingness to provide information.

The survey data allows an assessment of the trust levels at the time of the exploration of the trust process. Even though the primary interest of this study is not to reveal how much trust there is between the organisations, but rather how the different steps in the trust process are experienced and how they are influencing one another, looking at the trust levels helps understand the background of the mechanisms, and suggests where and why meaningful differences in trust occur. Trust in providing information was measured by one item in the survey: 'I easily share case-information with the following organisation'<sup>75</sup>, which was again asked five times to each of the respondents, once for each counter organisation. Therefore, there is no need to construct a new variable – as was the case with trustworthiness – instead it remains a

<sup>75</sup> The limitation to one item was due to the need to reduce the amount of questions, (since each question had to be repeated five times for each of the counter organisations in the chain) and the lack of an existing validated scale on trust in information sharing (See Chapter 5).

categorical variable with a range from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Twenty missing values occurred because the item was not applicable to a respondent when no information is provided to one of the other organisations, and another six items remained unanswered for undefined reasons.

The univariate frequency distribution of the variable ‘information providing’ is displayed on the left in Figure 30. It shows that the willingness to disclose information is generally leaning towards the positive end of the Likert-scale. Of a total of 144 valid responses, 72,3 percent agree to strongly agree with the statement, 13,2 percent score the middle neutral position (neither agree nor disagree), and 14,6 percent disagree or strongly disagreed with the statement. The fact that nearly three quarters of the interorganisational relationships are characterised by a positive feeling of trust is not surprising, given the earlier observed positive perceptions of the three dimensions of trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, and integrity. Indeed, according to the universal trust process, trust is directly influenced by the perception of the trustworthiness of the trustee, albeit with potential distortions due to consequences beyond the relationship. Such distortion occurs when, for example, information goes from  $A_i$  to B, but has to pass organisation C in order to get to B. In this case,  $A_i$  will also need to take into account their trust in C next to their trust in B.

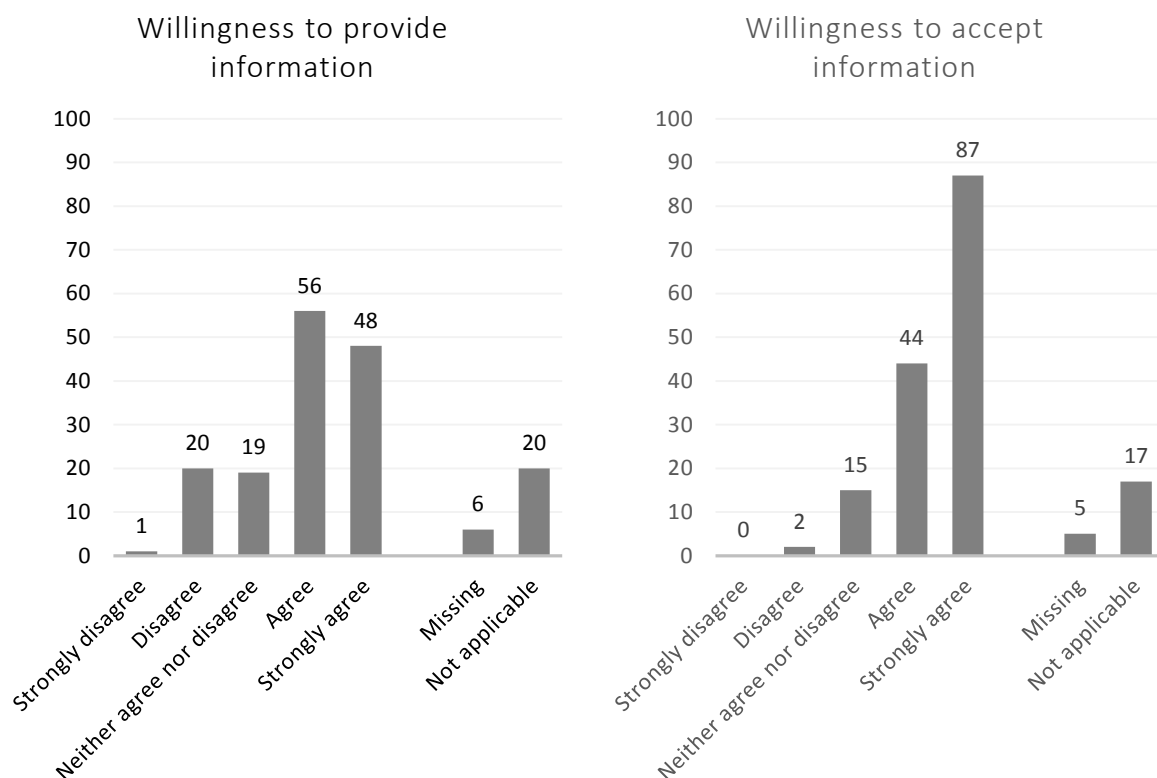


Figure 30 Frequency distributions in absolute numbers of the willingness to share and to accept information to and from the counterpart



**Accepting information** from the counterpart also poses risks since the receiver must assume the provided information is collected in a correct manner and the information does not include any mistakes (entered either accidentally or on purpose). The receiver will apply the information to make a decision about the minor, for which the receiver can be held accountable. Therefore, it is in the receiver's best interest that this information is correct and their sources can be trusted.

Trust in accepting the received information from the counterpart was similarly asked with a five-point Likert-scale item in the questionnaire: 'I easily accept received information of the following organisation'. There were 148 valid responses to this question, received from the 34 respondents. 22 values were missing (17 not applicable and 5 missing). The frequency distribution in Figure 30 shows that the willingness to accept information is scored even more positively than the willingness to provide information, with 88,5 percent agreeing to strongly agreeing with the statement, 10,1 percent of the responses remaining neutral, only 1,4 percent not agreeing with the statement, and none strongly disagreeing. These frequencies follow again logically from what was expected from the earlier observation that the organisations are perceived as trustworthy, which theoretically contributes to the willingness to be vulnerable.

## 8.2 Trust levels depending on trustor and trustee organisation

To get an impression of how willing members from one particular organisation in the chain are to provide information to another organisation in the chain, bivariate descriptive analysis are applied, with 'trust' and 'organisation' as included variables. For this, the trust variables are recoded into binary variables to make sure each category has sufficient valid data points. This was necessary since certain categories, for example the 'completely disagree' category, was used only little by the respondents. A trusting attitude ('1') is assigned when a respondent agrees or strongly agrees with the statement, and a no trust attitude<sup>76</sup> ('0') is assigned when the respondent does not agree with conviction with the statement (neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree)<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> This category is not labelled as 'distrust', agreeing with various authors (see e.g. Van De Walle & Six, 2013) that distrust is not just the opposite of trust. Indeed, also during the interviews the respondents did not want to use the term distrust when there was a lack of trust. Contrary to trust, distrust can be seen as "an actor's assured expectation of intended harm from the other" (Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 446), and the experiences in this case do not coincide with this definition.

<sup>77</sup> It is not self-evident to put the neutral middle category in the 'no trust' category instead of in the 'trust' category, since it means exactly that the respondent was unsure to which side his/her opinion leans. The reader should keep in mind that in the remainder of the chapter when referring to the 'no trust' category this includes respondents that were not trusting or not sure whether they are trusting, while the 'trust' category contains only respondents that trust the others without being unsure about this trust, so trusting the counterpart with conviction.

Table 22 displays the sample proportion of trustors from organisation A ( $A_i, A_j, \dots, A_n$ ) with high trust, meaning they are easily **willing to provide information** to trustee organisation B. The number of item-responses for each category is also displayed. The sample-wide proportion should be interpreted as follows: in 72 percent of the 144 ( $A_i \rightarrow B$ ) relations, there is a willingness to provide information to the counterpart. The final row of the table indicates how much a trustee organisation is trusted by all other members in the chain. The police perform the least in this respect with less than half of their counterparts (46 percent) easily willing to provide information to the police. The VK also scores below average, with a proportion of only 0,46. These two organisations also scored below average on the trustworthiness scale (see Table 9 in Chapter 6). The OCJ scores close to the average, which was the same for the trustworthiness. The court, OM, and SDJ score above average, in ascending order. Again, this was also the case for their trustworthiness scores.

The final column contains the opinion from all members of a specific trustor organisation about all other organisations in the chain. The voluntary care organisations OCJ and VK have the least trust in others and are thus most wary of providing information, followed by the court and SDJ also scoring below average. The OM is easily willing to provide information in 95 percent of their relationships with the other organisations, and police to all. Looking back at the situation for the perceived trustworthiness in Chapter 6, the fact that the police trust the others does not seem to follow from the perceived trustworthiness, since they valued the others' trustworthiness below average. The same holds true for the court, but then in the opposite direction, where their earlier seen high perception of trustworthiness of the others, does not seem to result in a high level of trust in the others. It is likely that forces beyond the relationship are at work here. Concerning the reciprocity of trust, for the police there is a large discrepancy between the high trust they have in the others and the low trust they receive from the others, meaning their trust is not reciprocated. For the OCJ, court, and SDJ the opposite is true, where they are the ones not reciprocating the high levels of trust they receive from the others.

Looking at the inner cells of the table, showing the specific directed trust levels (from all members of a trustor organisation in a trustee organisation), it becomes clear that the court has little willingness to share information with the mandated facilities (OCJ and VK), and this is reciprocal, where also the OCJ and VK are not willing to share information with the court. Only the OM is above average willing to provide information to the police. The SDJ, which is a care-inclined facility but for the judicially imposed youth care, enjoys more trust from the judicially inclined actors in the chain (police, OM, and court), than from the fellow care inclined organisations (OCJ and VK).

Table 22 Proportions of willingness to provide information from A to B; N= Number of valid responses used to calculate proportion

Trustor organisation	Trustee organisation													
	Police		OCJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N
Police	.	.	1,00	3	1,00	1	1,00	3	1,00	2	1,00	3	1,00	12
OCJ	0,20	5	.	.	0,60	5	0,80	5	0,50	2	0,60	5	0,55	22
VK	0,17	6	0,75	4	.	.	1,00	6	0,00	3	0,67	6	0,56	25
OM	1,00	8	0,88	8	0,88	8	.	.	1,00	8	1,00	8	0,95	40
Court	0,40	5	0,00	3	0,00	3	0,86	7	.	.	1,00	7	0,60	25
SDJ	0,25	4	0,75	4	0,75	4	0,50	4	1,00	4	.	.	0,65	20
All	0,46	28	0,73	22	0,67	21	0,84	25	0,79	19	0,86	29	0,72	144

Concerning the **willingness to accept information** of the members of one organisation from another organisation, presented in Table 23, the overall level increases from 72 percent to 89 percent, as was also clear from the earlier presented frequency distributions. From the column proportions displayed in the last row of the table, it can be concluded that the willingness to accept information is the highest when the information comes from the OM, with all 25 individuals from the other organisations trusting the information from the OM. The police and SDJ share a close second place, and the court follows, all scoring above average. The organisations linked to voluntary care (VK and OCJ) are trusted by a below average proportion of their counterparts, however, still around three-quarters of their counterparts trust them. For the police there is a great shift in trust in accepting information from the police compared to the trust levels of providing information to the police, going from place six to place two in the ranking. Possibly, the different risks that accompany the different types of exchange lead to a different result in the trust process. This confirms that trust is indeed task dependent.

The row totals displayed in the last column of Table 23 show that the police and the SDJ have full trust to accept information from others, followed by the court and the OM respectively. The VK and OCJ trust the others below average, which is reciprocal to the levels of trust they receive. From the inner cells, it can be concluded that especially the OCJ is not at ease sharing

information with the court, and the mandated facilities do not easily share information between themselves.

Table 23 Proportions of willingness to accept information from A to B; N= Number of valid responses used to calculate percentage

Trustee organisation														
Trustor organisation	Police		CJ		VK		OM		Court		SDJ		All	
	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N	p	N
Police	.	.	1,00	3	1,00	1	1,00	3	1,00	2	1,00	3	1,00	12
OCJ	0,80	5	.	.	0,60	5	1,00	5	0,50	2	0,80	5	0,77	22
VK	0,83	6	0,60	5	.	.	1,00	6	0,75	4	0,83	6	0,81	27
OM	1,00	8	0,75	8	0,63	8	.	.	1,00	8	1,00	8	0,88	40
Court	1,00	5	0,75	4	0,75	4	1,00	7	.	.	1,00	7	0,93	27
SDJ	1,00	4	1,00	4	1,00	4	1,00	4	1,00	4	.	.	1,00	20
All	0,93	28	0,79	24	0,73	22	1	25	0,90	20	0,93	29	0,89	148

### 8.3 The link between trustworthiness and trust

#### 8.3.1 First impression based on the survey data

To check whether the earlier found positive perceptions of trustworthiness lie at the basis of a higher willingness to exchange information, and to measure the strength of this relation, bivariate correlation analysis can be performed. Perceived trustworthiness is a continuous variable, as it was used in Chapter 6, and trust is used in the recoded binary format, to make sure each category has sufficient information to do meaningful analysis. A visual inspection of the correlation can be done by looking at the boxplots, where the distribution of the perceived trustworthiness of the trusting relationships is compared to the perceived trustworthiness of the non-trusting relationships. Figure 31 shows that the median perceived trustworthiness score for the trusting relationships in information *providing* is around half a point higher than for the non-trusting relationships, and that overall the trustworthiness perceptions are higher when there is also trust present. The median perceived trustworthiness is one point higher on the 5-point trustworthiness scale in those relationships where information is easily accepted by the receiver.

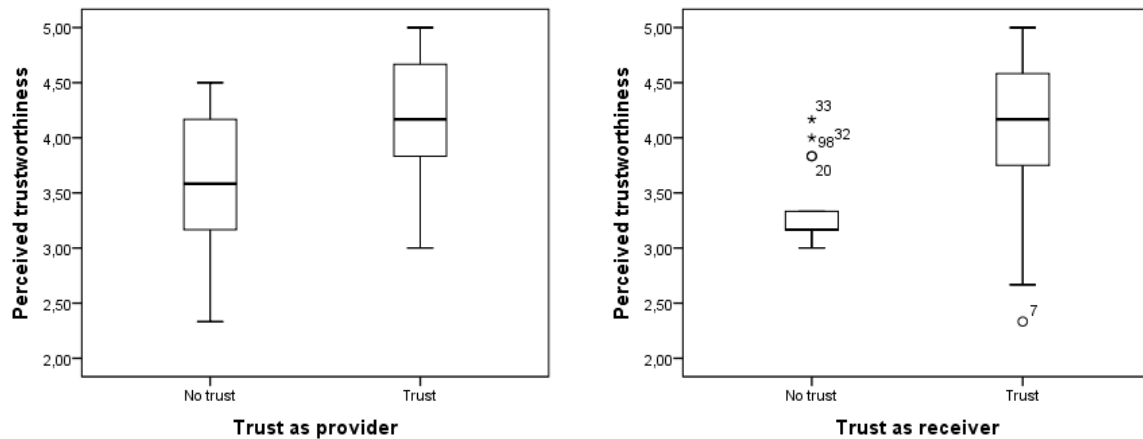


Figure 31 Boxplots of the distribution of the perceived trustworthiness for trusting and non-trusting directed relationships in information providing and information accepting

To start with a parsimonious testing of this correlation, a bivariate correlation test can be performed without taking the clustering into account. A point-biserial correlation can be performed, which is a special case of the Pearson correlation when a binary variable is involved. The assumptions for this test are that one of the two variables is a continuous variable (the perceived trustworthiness scale) and the second variable is dichotomous (trust in providing information). A third assumption is that there are no outliers for the continuous variable in both categories of the dichotomous variable. The boxplots show that this is not the case for 'trust in providing' but for 'trust in accepting', there are five outliers. These will, however, not be discarded for the testing procedure, because this would lower the amount of data-points for the 'no trust' group too much. Therefore, the results will need to be interpreted with caution. A fourth assumption is that the continuous variable is approximately normally distributed for each category of the dichotomous variable. This is not the case for both trust variables, as was tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality (see Appendix F). This is not a reason not to perform the tests, but needs to be kept in mind when interpreting the results. A fifth and last assumption is that the continuous variable has equal variances for each category of the dichotomous variable. This was the case for 'trust in providing', but not for 'trust in receiving', as tested by the Levene's test of equality of variances (see Appendix F). Again, this needs to be considered in the evaluation of the results.

The point-biserial correlation test is performed one-tailed, because the hypothesis is that the correlation will be in the positive direction: the higher an organisation is scored on the trustworthiness scale, the more likely the trustor will trust that organisation in the exchange of information. The outcome of the tests (see Table 24) shows that there is a significant correlation between perceived trustworthiness and trust in both interactions. Since certain assumptions

were violated, the correlation coefficient should not be used to make claims about the strength of the correlation.

*Table 24 Point-biserial correlation test between 'trust in providing' and 'trustworthiness' and between 'trust in receiving' and 'trustworthiness'*

		Trustworthiness
Trust in providing	Pearson Correlation	,385*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	,000
	N	144
Trust in receiving	Pearson Correlation	,398*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	,000
	N	148

\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

To estimate the size of the effect, taking the clustering into account, a generalised linear mixed model with logit transformation should be performed given the binary dependent trust variable; unfortunately, this is not yet sufficiently developed in the standard statistical programs available. In any case, it is safe to assume that, based on both the visual inspection of the boxplots, and the highly significant point-biserial correlation coefficients, at least among the sampled respondents, that there is a tendency to trust an origination during information exchange (both providing and receiving), when the trustworthiness of that organisation is perceived positively. The chances of finding a significant link when taking the clustering into account are fairly high. This link will be further inspected based on the interview data, looking also at the different dimensions of trustworthiness (ABI) and the different types of information that were identified before (mandatory, optional, and prohibited).

### 8.3.2 In-depth analysis based on the interview data

The survey results have shown that in general the willingness to disclose and accept information to and from the counterpart is present, and that this is in part determined by the perceived trustworthiness of the respondent. To understand better why the trust levels are so high and how the connection with the trustworthiness works, a deeper analysis of the interview data is performed. The preliminary study revealed that there is a spectrum of different types of information shared, depending on the formality and legal requirements of the information (see Chapter 4). First, there is the **mandatory information exchange**, which concerns standard information that legally should be disclosed towards each other. It includes identification data on the clients, and objective observations of the situation of the client. Second, there is the **optional information exchange**, which is information that can be shared between the organisations, but there is no legal obligation to do so. The last category is **prohibited**

**information exchange**, which is information that falls under the professional confidentiality. This is, for example, information on the criminal background of a client or detailed information on the course of the voluntary youth care shared without the client's consent. In exceptional cases this information can be shared, namely when a clear and acute dangerous situation can only be averted by disclosing confidential information. From the interviews, it became clear that the respondents do not always know what information can be shared freely, and with whom, due to the grey areas in the legislation.

In the survey sample, a more trusting attitude was detected towards receiving information than towards sending out information. This suggests that there are different levels of trust depending on whether you provide or receive information, and that trust is task dependent. Table 25 presents a differentiation between six forms of information, depending on the position in the exchange, and what category of information is being exchanged. These interactions, denoted by the content of the information and whose side is viewed, might depend on different factors before they will take place. While most interactions will not be easily placed within one of these six archetypical categories, but will rather be made up of a mix of these types, it remains interesting to try to find patterns to understand these interactions better.

*Table 25 Types of information that can be provided or received for which a different willingness could exist*

	Information provider	Information receiver
<b>Mandatory information</b>	Need to share	Need to know
<b>Optional information</b>	Nice to share	Nice to know
<b>Prohibited information</b>	Shouldn't share	Shouldn't know

The next sections will describe what the respondents said about each type of information and how their willingness to exchange information was influenced by the perceived trustworthiness of the counterpart. However, in what follows only the aspect of the willingness to *provide* information will be further discussed, so the situation where the trustor is the one providing the information. Although the aspect of *accepting* information was also touched upon during the interviews, little substantive evidence emerged from the interviews about this particular aspect. It was easier for the respondents to elaborate on their experiences in providing information than was the case for receiving information. Even though no conclusive explanation for this could be deducted from the interviews, one possible explanation is, as observed from the quantitative

analysis, that there is generally a willingness to accept received information, and little doubt exists about the truthfulness of this information. It is likely that trust in these experiences is self-evident, and the respondents are not mindful of the opposite situation. Therefore, in the remainder of this chapter the focus will lie on the willingness to provide information, from the perspective of the trustor.

#### 8.3.2.1 *Mandatory information exchange: Need to share*

The first category of information exchange is mandatory information exchange, or ‘need to share’ information for the provider. It is information that is formal and legally prescribed, for which standardised procedures and documents exist. Within the judicial youth care chain, there is generally a high willingness to share this type of information. The counterpart will need to consider the provided information as part of their job description, and the risk for neglect of the information will be small. The following quote illustrates how a public prosecutor expects everyone to act on provided mandatory information, without the risk of the receiver neglecting the information:

*Yes, there is trust, when we receive a referral we will always take it seriously and we will always investigate this. Nobody will ever say they will not do anything with it, they always will. It's reasonable to think every other organisation will do that too. (AI)*

This willingness appears to be present irrespective of the perception of the trustworthiness of the counterpart. Even when a positive perception of the counterpart's trustworthiness is absent, it is expected that this type of information will continue to circulate nonetheless. Each member will share the information they are required to share because it is part of their mandatory tasks, whether they expect the counterpart to act on it correctly or not. Illustrative of this are the following quotes from two SDJ counsellors, one describing an actual situation of low trust, which did not hinder mandatory information sharing, and the other anticipating that people would still do what is expected of them even if they did not get along personally:

*I can't say there is more than 50 percent trust between all these actors, and it still works. So I don't think trust is the basis for everything to work well. It could help if everyone could trust each other and did what they said they would do. We could maybe come to a solution [for the child] faster, but there would not be a magical improvement in the functioning. (P)*



*Everyone should expect that you act professionally. Is the cooperation running well, that's a bonus. If it's not, too bad. They should still expect you to do your job, whether you hit it off or not. (Q)*

As such, the willingness to share what needs to be shared will typically be present, regardless of a positive trustworthiness perception. This is due to a sense of duty, with everyone taking their responsibilities. Not sharing 'need to share' information could pose a greater risk for the provider than sharing the information, because a family cannot be helped when the information does not pass down the chain, and the information holder could be accused of neglect of duties. This could lead, however, to a form of *forced* trust when information is provided while the trustor has negative expectations of the outcome, and creates unease for the trustor. When this was mentioned by the respondents, it was usually connected to a doubt about the **ability** of the other organisation to do something with the information, generally because they knew the counterpart was overloaded with work. When the estimated ability is low, it does not refrain one to send mandatory information, but it might be sent in another way, with more reminders and additional information to make sure the others take it up, as this juvenile judge describes where the mandatory information is the request for a social investigation to the SDJ:

*If I request further investigation I hope this is executed conscientiously and that I can count on the information I receive being correct. Sometimes we don't have a recent report at the hearing and that is annoying. Then I need to sound the alarm. Or when I requested investigations last year and then at the hearing I discover nothing was done in the case. It feels a bit like a damaging of my trust. (N)*

Even when the trustworthiness of the direct receiving party is perceived well, the disclosed information is still handled with some reservation by the provider. This is because written information will get included in the case file, meaning that in the future other parties will get access to this information, of which you do not know the trustworthiness. This is an example of the consequences that lie beyond the trustor-trustee relationship that are also included in the universal trust model by Dietz (2011). This counsellor of the SDJ describes this nicely:

*Your information has to be correct and complete, but you have to be careful with the way in which you formulate it. If it would be only for the magistrate, I would have no issues with that. But lawyers will read this as well. I don't know those people and you should be careful nothing is drawn out of context or interpreted differently than was initially intended. (O)*

*Proposition:* Mandatory information will always be shared, regardless of the perceived trustworthiness of the counterpart. However, when the ability of the counterpart to act on the information is perceived well, the information will be shared in a more comfortable manner.

#### 8.3.2.2 *Optional information exchange: Nice to share*

The second type of information is the optional information, or ‘nice to share’ information. Within every interaction between two or more members of different organisations, there is generally room for sharing additional information on top of what the legal requirements prescribe, especially when there is non-written communication involved. Even though basic tasks can be performed based on just the mandatory information, optional information can be extremely valuable for the decision-makers to take into account, increasing the success of these decisions. Nonetheless, sharing this information carries certain risks for the provider. Firstly, there is a larger margin of choice on the account of the information provider to share the information. Doing more than is legally required in a professional setting takes away time from performing other required tasks. As such, investing time and effort in side tasks poses a risk, especially in a setting where time is a scarce resource. The following team leader at the VK describes such situation where there is no time for optional information sharing:

*They want continuous feedback throughout the whole process, but I’m sorry we don’t have the time for that. We often hear that the cooperation with us is not good because we give too little feedback, even though I have the impression we try do that quite a lot. (I)*

A second risk comes from the ‘nice to share’ information being less objective and shared in an unstandardized format, increasing the possibility that the receiver will misinterpret the information. Indeed, as one OCJ counsellor puts it: “It is difficult to write down a suspicion, even though these suspicions are usually the most worrying. [...] But the other can interpret this as a fact, and not a suspicion” (AL).

As a consequence, ‘nice to share’ information will not spontaneously flow irrespective of the perception of the trustworthiness, as was the case with the mandatory information. For these informal interactions, trust becomes more important. The following quotes give a description of a VK counsellor who can imagine limiting the information provision to only the ‘need to share’ information when things would turn bad, and a OCJ counsellor where this is already the case:

*If I would not trust the other I would certainly try to do most things on my own. Then automatically you will avoid contact. [...] Although in this sector avoidance isn't always possible, the contact would be more careful, more formal. (J)*

*I have had less positive experiences with the VK and now I am less inclined to discuss things with them. I'll rather discuss it within my team without being dependent upon the VK's actions again. (AD)*

When it comes to sharing optional information, one particular dimension of the counterpart's trustworthiness plays a prominent role, namely the perceived **benevolence**. As such, an increased willingness to share it depends on the receiver's perceived openness to discussion, willingness to listen to the others' thoughts and take them into account, and readiness to share additional information when the situation calls for it. Exemplary of this benevolent nature are judges who give the impression that the counsellors "better call once too often than once too little" (AF), and the following SDJ counsellor returning the favour of sharing additional interesting information to a police assistant:

*It's also a game of give and take, of information. With certain policemen of a district where you go many times and that you see often, you will easily share unofficial information. It works in two directions, when you remain tight-lipped on your side, you won't get anything from the other side. It's not always useful information, but the information can confirm a hunch or it's something you can try to turn into hard information. (AV)*

The other two dimensions, ability and integrity, seem less important for deciding whether or not to share optional information, although, a few mentions were made that one will sooner decide to call someone who works hard and knows how to handle things, and someone who is known to handle information in a professional matter.

*Proposition:* The willingness to share optional information will be especially dependent on whether the counterpart is perceived as benevolent.

#### 8.3.2.3 *Prohibited information exchange: Shouldn't share*

The third type of information is the prohibited information, or 'should not share' information. This is especially relevant in this case, where certain restrictions about what can be shared between the organisations exist because of the separation between voluntary and judicial youth care, and the professional confidentiality. Nonetheless, this prohibited information can still be

valuable for different reasons to the different entities in the chain. Sharing this information can mean finding a better solution for a child, and finding it faster. It can decrease the workload and increase the work successes, which will in turn benefit the child and its environment. These benefits results in certain members in the chain sharing information, even when it is unclear whether the legal conditions are strictly met. The following counsellor and team leader of the SDJ named a few advantages of these exchanges:

*We are working around children, and everything should be done in the interest of the child. And you should stay correct, but it's all about the children, so let's go for it and not be stuck. When all of us stick only to the mandate and to what can and cannot be done, we sometimes won't get there. Much more accidents would happen I believe. Luckily, there are these informal ways to consult each other for things such as "Am I seeing this right or am I completely wrong about this?" (AV)*

*The better the cooperation and the better you know each other the easier you can walk on that fine line of confidentiality, purely functional, in order not to take insane decisions. (R)*

For this type of information, the willingness to share it seems to be based on the positive expectations of the other's **integrity**. The information provider has to be certain that the receiver will not abuse the information and will not put the information in writing so that it can be traced down to the original sender, since the transferal of this information without the necessary formal requirements can lead to sanctions. This SDJ counsellor describes how indeed a trustee's integrity can affect the willingness of a trustor to send you information:

*It has much to do with who you are as a person. That is a very important factor to determine which information you will receive: how careful do you handle the information. You have the hard facts which you can use, but then you also have soft information. And when you get soft information you should be cautious. You should not immediately set many things in motion, but keep it in the back of your mind. And I think older colleagues therefore receive more soft information. (AV)*

You also need to trust the counterpart not to expose the provider of the information, or to impeach them for breaking the rules. One prosecutor stated that even when all conditions are met to prosecute, they do not find it a priority to prosecute and will invoke their discretionary

power to dismiss the case, so they “should not be afraid of this” (AI). Most counsellors are confident that the public prosecutor will not prosecute them when they share information they should not actually be sharing:

*Some cases are not really discussed with anonymization of the case, sometimes it is borderline acceptable. But the last thing I heard is that there have not been any convictions yet. And to be honest, I also balance on that edge a lot, and cross the edge a lot. But I have never worried about that, ever. (AH)*

The sender should also be aware whether the receiving end of the information understands the value of sharing information balancing on the edge of confidentiality. When a counterpart puts more value in keeping strictly to the law, there is no desire from their part to receive this information. The trustor must be confident that the counterpart equally values the interest of the child higher than the value of keeping with the regulation. Below, two conflicting views of how one sees the possibility of sharing confidential information are presented. It is probable that with the second respondent a confidential information exchange will be more risky than with the first:

*When I look at their views and their confidentiality I respect this. But you also have to respect the reality with which we are confronted. And when there is mutual respect much more can be done. When there is mutual trust and a mutual understanding of the views and context then much more is possible and this can only benefit the minor. (M)*

*Trust is very important, but it can never circumvent the regulation. It is simply the law that we cannot transfer information from the voluntary care to the imposed [judicial] care unless the client explicitly agrees on this. And there can be trust all you want, but if you don't have an agreement you shouldn't pass things on. (AK)*

For this reason, a criminologist at the OM is valued a lot by both the counsellors and the magistrates, because they have been educated with an added emphasis on the social side of justice besides the strict legal application, making them highly competent for the job, with the right values steering their behaviour. As such, the criminologist embodies a bridging function between the voluntary care and the involuntary care.

During the interviews, most negative experiences mentioned concerned prohibited information exchange, proving that this is indeed the exchange that carries the most risks, and can

frequently go wrong. The most heard problem regarded a trustor sharing information in a confidential manner, while the counterpart disclosed the information and the source in the case documents. This has a large effect on the relationship, as a counsellor of the SDJ describes:

*I had given information to the police, and it was important this was not disclosed to the client. They did write it down in their report, from which you could know the information came from me. This was of course not ok for these clients. And then I learned not to do this again. [...] It's stupid that one incident can distort your whole approach but it's better to conserve your limits. [...] I might call them again about information that is already on paper, but never about confidential information, because you can't know where it will end up. You can say there is a breach of trust, yes. (P)*

Other respondents were of the opinion that confidential information should never be shared. Certain members found it a too great risk for the provider, while others found it a slippery slope, where sharing information once, could lead to a habit of sharing it:

*You should in any case have a basic distrust because if you trust blindly you will come to grief, and you'll have a situation where you as a counsellor express to a person from the police that you don't know, the situation in good faith and the police-official transfers literally to the public prosecutor what you just said. (R)*

*I find it a trap, that we can share anything in confidence, and we can break the professional secrecy since we all know each other, so it's no big deal. I see a big trap there, that it will be used to disclose anything. (K)*

**Proposition:** The willingness to share prohibited information will especially increase when the integrity of the counterpart is perceived well.

#### 8.4 Feedback on the perceived trustworthiness

The interviews did not extensively cover the aspect of trust in accepting the received information. At least in this context, not much proof is found that the willingness to accept information is affected by the perceived trustworthiness of the information provider. What did stick out during the analysis at the side of the receiver was that the act of providing information forms a new basis for assessing the trustworthiness of the providing party. As such, the result of this information sharing process (or risk taking act) brings us back to the start of the universal trust model, namely to the inputs on which trustworthiness is based. It was established, for

example, that the communication strategy of a trustee organisation is an important characteristic determining the trustworthiness of their members. This feedback mechanism is also included in the universal trust model (see Figure 28).

Interestingly enough, the various types of information being provided also signal different aspects of the trustworthiness. It was found that, a willingness to provide mandatory, optional, and prohibited information is respectively influenced by a positive assessment of the ability, the benevolence, and the integrity of the trustee. Now, a similar pattern emerges where being willing to share the different kinds of information also offers the counterpart a view on different aspects of your trustworthiness. Looking back at the findings from Chapter 6 about what specific traits of a trustee are necessary to be perceived as trustworthy, these traits are displayed during one of the three kinds of information sharing. The **ability** of the trustee was judged based on whether provided information is correct, complete, and shared in a timely and efficient manner, and the trustee possesses good communication skills. This will be mainly evaluated based on the ‘**need to know**’ information provision. When this information does not come through as it should, it can leave a bad impression on the ability of the trustee who was responsible. When even the basic necessary tasks cannot be executed correctly, it is not exemplary of the abilities of (a member of) that organisation. The following criminologist at the OM describes:

*I won't say they don't care about it, I assume these people want to perform well, but due to time limitations it is not always good. It happens a lot that cases appear before court after six months and nothing has been done in the case, except one consultation to hear how things are going. Then you don't know anything, you can't have a clear picture of that family, that's my opinion. I think there should be more follow-up, certainly with the juvenile court. (H)*

*Proposition:* The way in which mandatory information is provided by the trustee can deliver a good source of input to the trustor about the abilities of the trustee.

It was observed in Chapter 6 that **benevolence** in this context is determined by showing a willingness to cooperate, being flexible, and facilitating, or at least not complicating the other's work. This kind of behaviour will be displayed especially during ‘**nice to know**’ information exchange, where the willingness to share extra information on top of what is strictly required can be determined. A counsellor at the VK describes the perception of the police as follows:

*Most of our contacts with the police are by phone, so we need to estimate the different personalities. When you feel someone is willing to take the time and to listen, that will make all the difference. When someone is asking for information, but is also willing to give some, then there is reciprocity. Those are important elements. (J)*

**Proposition:** The way in which optional information is provided can deliver a good source of input to the receiver about the benevolence of the provider.

The identified qualities required to be perceived well on **integrity** were found to be discretion, not leaking information, and not taking on a habit of gossiping about clients. This kind of behaviour can especially be signalled when sharing '**shouldn't know**' information. This judge describes how counsellors should deal with confidential information:

*With information you need to watch out. Sometimes they receive information from within their network, from other care givers. Yes, it is very important that they don't get into a gossiping-mode, like "and they did this and that...". (BN)*

**Proposition:** The way in which prohibited information is provided by the trustee can deliver a good source of input to the trustor about the integrity of the trustee.

## 8.5 Chapter summary and discussion

In this chapter, an answer was found to the question about the link between perceived trustworthiness and trust. Trust was operationalised as the willingness to exchange information with the counterpart, which is a specific interaction where an information provider and an information receiver are involved, and where the assumption is made that the optimal exchange will take place when both the provider and the receiver trust one another. The receiver should trust that the sender is trustworthy in collecting and providing the information, while the sender should trust that the receiver will correctly interpret and apply the received information. First, it was established that there were high levels of trust present within the different interorganisational relations in the judicial youth care chain. The willingness to accept information was higher than the willingness to provide information, meaning that trust is indeed task or domain dependent. Possible explanations for this variation are that the risk is perceived larger with disclosing information, than with accepting information, since especially the sender invest time and energy in collecting and sharing the information, and is vulnerable when sharing. Accepting information is more of a passive act, and the risks only come later, when the information is also applied for decision making. Possibly, the survey and interviews



were not successful in grasping the full risks that come from accepting information, which should be explored in further research. Among the sampled respondents, the willingness to disclose information was the highest towards the SDJ, and the lowest towards the police. The willingness to accept information from the OM was the highest and from the VK the lowest. Some of the lowest trust scores were again seen between organisations that work with a different set of values, namely between the judicial and the care organisations. There was a significant correlation between the earlier examined levels of perceived trustworthiness and these levels of trust.

Based on the interviews with the respondents, this link was further deepened, and it was determined that for the willingness to share the different kinds of information – mandatory, optional, and prohibited – different aspects of trustworthiness are important. Providing mandatory information carries relatively little risk and therefore the willingness to share it is independent of the perceived trustworthiness, but will happen with more peace of mind when the receiver's ability is perceived well. One possible explanation for this is that the sender of the information is obliged to share the information, which means there is little to no discretionary power on the side of the holder of the information whether to share the information. There is clarity on which information should be shared, on what is the purpose of the information and on how it should be transferred, so little deliberation is needed when sharing the information. Moreover, this is the type of information that will be shared most regularly, so it is the exchange that the members are most habituated to. Furthermore, the sender takes no risk of losing time from the mandatory tasks they should perform, and they can expect the receiver to act on the information as a part of their legally described tasks. The risk actually lies more in not disclosing the information, since then the provider would not fulfil their legal obligations.

Disclosing optional information carries some greater risks, and therefore depends on the perceived trustworthiness of the counterpart, and especially on the benevolence of the counterpart. The counterpart should be attentive to the efforts of the provider, and should listen and be willing to reciprocate with information in the future. As such, if a network wants to benefit from optional information flow, it will be important that the expectations of the benevolence are realistic, to make the perception meet the expectation, and thus to decrease the trustworthiness gap.

The greatest risks come with sharing sensitive and (borderline) prohibited information. Despite the prohibition, when confidential information is shared, this can bring many benefits to the efficiency of the task execution in the chain, as Zaheer et al. (1998, p. 144) stated that

“negotiations may be easier because of boundary spanners’ willingness to share sensitive information and their confidence that information provided by the counterpart is not misrepresented. Consequently, we expect mutually beneficial agreements to be reached more quickly when boundary spanners trust each other”. It was established that sharing prohibited information requires a positive perception of the integrity of the counterpart, to make sure they value the information the same as the provider, and that they in turn will be discreet about the information.

The fact that separate information has different requirements further confirms that trust is task-specific (also referred to as domain specific in the literature) where with every new interaction, not only the function of the trustee can influence the willingness to be vulnerable (as provider or receiver), but also the type of information involved can determine the outcome of the trust process. Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman (1995, p. 727) said in this respect that “the trustor’s perception and interpretation of the context of the relationship will affect both the need for trust and the evaluation of trustworthiness. Changes in such factors as the political climate and the perceived volition of the trustee in the situation can cause a re-evaluation of trustworthiness”.

Caution should be granted to the fact that here might be such a thing as too much trust and too much information sharing when also confidential information begins spreading. Other, possibly higher, goods should be respected such as the privacy of the clients, the right to a fair trial, and the safeguarding of the client’s trust in the system. Even though rationality will be less bounded with more information available, the question should be asked whether a decision-maker needs to know as much information as possible. Will the decision making improve when the decision-maker needs to take into account information that is difficult to value because it is shared in an illegal manner, or it is based on hunches that cannot be demonstrated by concrete proof. Inertia in the decision-making process can stem from a lack of information, but also from an information overload. Trust and distrust can both have interesting functions within a certain organisational setting. It will be key to any organisation not to make the mistake to strive only for a maximum amount of trust, since too much trust can have adverse consequences. Too much trust can lead to blind trust, which opens the doors for abuse by the other party (Oomsels et al., 2016). What should be focused on is finding the optimal amount of trust, together with an optimal amount of distrust, and a balance between the two, since these will both be influencing each other. Kramer (2009) calls this right amount of trust ‘*tempered trust*’. I would add there is also a need for *tempered distrust*, especially in a public service delivery chain such as the judicial chain, since the different entities in the chain should be aware of and control for possible

mishaps of the other entities in the chain. The system should have enough checks and balances incorporated which could be skipped when there is blind trust.

A last finding is that apart from trustworthiness being a predictor of trust, the risk-taking acts resulting from trust function as input factors for the perception of the trustworthiness. This feedback mechanism is also foreseen in the theoretical framework by Dietz. What these findings add is that the effect was diversified between the three kinds of information sharing giving input and knowledge about respectively the ability, the benevolence, and the integrity of the information provider. As was described in Chapter 2, trust has been researched both as a cause of communication and information sharing (Cheng, 2011; Mohr & Sohi, 1995; O'Reilly, 1978; Sezen & Yilmaz, 2007; Williams, 2005) and a consequence of information sharing (Fisman & Khanna, 1999; Sydow, 2000), and indeed should be approached as a reciprocal process.

The result of this chapter are summarised in a matrix (see Table 26) describing how the different kinds of information exchange carry with them different levels of vulnerability, require different dimensions of perceived trustworthiness, and signal different dimensions of trustworthiness to the receiver of the information.

*Table 26 The three types of information, each requiring and signalling different dimensions of trustworthiness*

	<b>Risk/Vulnerability</b> (for the provider)	<b>Requires</b> (from the receiver)	<b>Signals</b> (to the receiver)
<b>Mandatory information</b>	Low	(Ability)	Ability
<b>Optional information</b>	Medium	Benevolence	Benevolence
<b>Prohibited information</b>	High	Integrity	Integrity

With this last results chapter, the study comes to a conclusion, and in the next chapter, a summarising overview of the study is provided, together with a discussion of the results, and a look at what the results can mean for future research and its implications on practice.



## Chapter 9 Conclusions

In this last chapter, the thesis is concluded with a summary of the results, indicating also how these results build on to the existing knowledge. A reflection is made about how the study was executed and what could be improved. Potential future research on the matter is identified, and recommendations for practitioners and policy makers will be given.

### 9.1 Main findings and contributions

The focus of the research revolved around discovering how the trust process was experienced by the different actors in the judicial youth care chain in Flanders, when interacting with the other organisations in that chain. This is relevant since trust has been identified as an important social force for successful cooperation, and the judicial system is a network of organisations where cooperation could be difficult due to its compositional features. The organisations included in the case are the youth police, the mandated facilities OCJ and VK, the juvenile public prosecutor's office, and the juvenile court. There is a complex and strenuous context in which they work together. The involved organisations are highly interdependent of one another to perform their tasks, and the risks of a faulty cooperation are high, since children in dangerous situations could be undetected or overlooked. If one organisation in the chain neglects its duties, or functions below acceptable norms, the mutual goal of child protection is more difficult to reach. In the same time, the organisations function autonomous from one another, in the sense that there is no hierarchical link between the organisations. They have little grasp on how the other functions, and are thus even more dependent on the good will of each actor. The six organisations are managed by four different policy domains, and are governed on the local, communal, and federal level. Nonetheless, five out of the six organisations are coordinated by the decree on integrated youth care since 2014. Only the youth police are not mentioned in this decree. While there is a lot of academic interest in the functioning of networks, these studies usually look at temporary networks, or networks that form voluntarily, and can dissolve again when cooperation is not successful. Here, however, it concerns a non-voluntary, high risk, high autonomy, high interdependence network, which is expected to have its own particular trust dynamics. While close cooperation and trust between the organisations could be beneficial for the effectiveness and efficiency of the chain, it should not hinder other important features indispensable in a constitutional state. Such features are the right to an independent ruling, the instalment of checks and balances, the protection of the privacy of the

clients, and trust of the clients in the justice system and its members, necessary to establish cooperation.

The research questions were set out to discover (1) what are the levels of trustworthiness, (2) what specific characteristics make someone perceived as able, benevolent, and having integrity in this context, (3) what are the context specific inputs that influence these perceptions, and what are the mechanisms for their effect, and (4) how does trust, in the form of being willing to exchange information, originate from the different aspects of trustworthiness.

Despite the challenging context in which the actors operate, it was established, through interpretation of both survey and interview data, that the **trustworthiness** of the organisations, and the members of these organisations, is reasonably high. While there was some individual variation between the organisations, with the organisations at the beginning of the chain (police, OCJ, and VK) being consistently perceived the least positive on the different dimensions of trustworthiness, the overall mean trustworthiness reaches 4,07 on a scale of 1 to 5. Regarding different kinds of organisational relations, a pattern has been detected where organisations with the same perspectives value each other somewhat higher than the others (security vs. care), however, this pattern is far from perfect. It is possible that shared values indeed play a role, but it is not necessarily a decisive factor determining how someone will be perceived. Since trustworthiness is not going to have the same components in every context, where a surgeon for example is expected to have other abilities than a lawyer, it was deemed useful to see what constitutes trustworthiness in this context. An able person in this context is someone who provides complete and correct information, passes this on in a timely and efficient manner, and possesses good communication skills. Also within the chain, ability depends on the main tasks one has to perform, where for the information gatherers (police and counsellors) it is more important to provide correct and complete information, in a timely and efficiently manner, while for the judicial actors who make decisions the communication skills are most valued. A member of a partner organisation is seen as benevolent when they show a willingness to cooperate, are flexible, and make an effort not to complicate the work of the trustor, or even facilitate it. Having integrity is based on a combination of being discreet, honest, professional, and responsible, having the right priorities, and making conscientious decisions. In general, when a lack of trustworthiness was mentioned, this was not attributed to personal malevolent intentions or incompetency, but to the structural, organisational limitations hampering the behaviour of the individuals.

Based on what emerged from the interviews, a **trustworthiness gap-model** could be designed, which offers a view on how a trustworthiness perception can be shaped by various related concepts. First, it is proposed that a positive perception can only occur when the expectations of a trustor about how a trustee *will* behave coincide with the expectations the trustor has about how the trustee *should* behave. The narrower this gap becomes, the higher the chances for a positive perception. Both the trustor's prior expectations and the perception can in turn be influenced by three other gaps that might exist (see Figure 32). First, a gap can exist between the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee and the perception of the intentions and behaviour of the trustee. A perception will most likely always be somewhat distorted because the trustor can never acquire a full overview of the trustee's intentions and behaviour. All actors are bounded in their rationality, where a decision on the trustworthiness is limited by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make a decision. This will be even more the case when the trustor and the trustee reside in separate autonomous organisations, with less chances of observing each other in their work environment. A bias can be either positive or negative, where a trustee is either seen as more trustworthy than is actually the case, or less trustworthy. Second, a gap can exist between the prior expectations of the trustor, and the actual intentions and behaviour of the trustee. This is the case when the trustee manifests intentions and behaviours that are not in line with how the trustor expects the trustee to perform. This can be due to either the trustee's behaviour being out of line, or due to the expectations of the trustor being unrealistic, or both. The third and final gap exists between the expectations of the trustor, and the perception of the expectations by the trustee. There again will be some distortion present in this perception, and the goal is to reduce this bias and bring both factors closer together. At the end of Chapter 6 a checklist was developed to aid a gap analysis for trustor-trustee relationships.

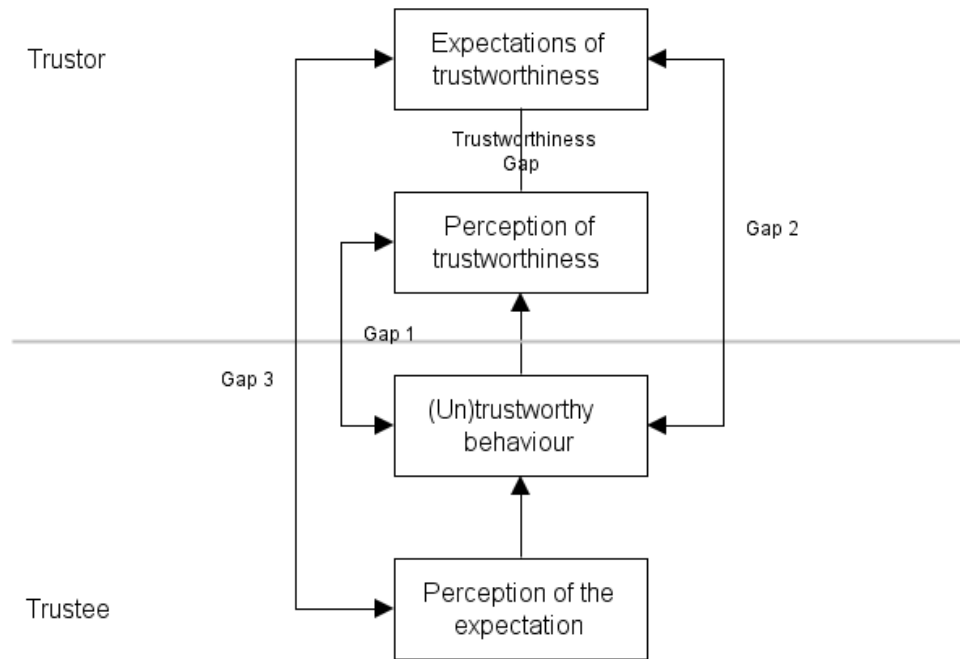


Figure 32 The trustworthiness gap model

Even though this model emerged from an analysis of interviews within the context of the judicial youth care chain, I believe it is also applicable in other interorganisational contexts, and even within any trustor-trustee relationship, be it between colleagues, friends, family, or intimate relationships. Interestingly enough, in other fields studying other human behaviour than trust, similar gap models have been developed, such as in marketing and accounting studies. This strengthens the external validity of the model.

Regarding the question of which **context specific inputs** affect the perception of the trustworthiness, the focus went to the broader aspects of the cooperation, and the situational and domain specific influences. The findings are based solely on the interview data, and emerged through thematic analysis of the open-ended questions on what the respondents viewed as important characteristics. Two sets of factors were extracted, the *organisational* inputs and the *interorganisational* inputs, with each set containing four separate inputs.

The first organisational input concerned the *communication policies* of the organisations in the chain, where allowing frequent, personal, informal, and open communication can improve the perception of the trustworthiness. Communication offers opportunities to learn about the other's expectations, intentions, behaviours, and limitations, which can contribute to closing all three gaps at once, by removing biases and adjusting expectations. The second organisational input is the *personnel management* of an organisation, where trustworthy individuals should be attracted, supported, and retained by the organisation. This increases the chances that members



of the organisation will display trustworthy behaviour, closing gap 2. The third input is the *internal process control* of an organisation. Internal control mechanisms can make sure the members refrain from posing untrustworthy behaviour, also closing gap number 2. When these internal control processes are also known to the trustors, gap 1 can also close, since the trustor can obtain better expectations that a trustee *will* behave trustworthy because they are controlled. The last organisational factor entails the *workload* the members of the organisation are burdened with. A high workload can take away time from the trustee to perform to the best of their abilities, and prevent them from being benevolent. This behaviour will depart from the desired behaviour by the trustor, widening gap 2.

The first interorganisational input is the stipulation of a *shared goal*. The organisations in the judicial youth care chain are connected by the shared goal of protecting children in alarming situations, which all consider as the biggest priority. This causes members to display trustworthy behaviour, because they are motivated to perform well and to cooperate in order to reach this goal, closing gap 2. The second interorganisational feature that works as an input for trustworthiness is the strict *separation of duties* between the organisations. This causes the organisations to be autonomous, promoting their accountability and responsibility, to be truly independent of one another making them invest in good cooperation, and to have clarity on what can be expected from one another. This affects all three gaps at once. The third interorganisational factor is the *continuity* of the cooperation. The past they share causes behaviour, expectations, and limitations to become apparent to all involved parties, diminishing all gaps. The future they expect to share makes them refrain from posing untrustworthy behaviour, not to jeopardize the cooperation, and to invest in the continuous improvement of the cooperation. This is reinforced by the fact that they know they will all need each other in the future, because of the mutual interdependencies. The last interorganisational input is the *proximity* of the organisations, and the members of the organisations. This proximity is determined by the physical placement of the buildings or departments within buildings, but also by the amount of individuals within an organisation. Proximity, just like the communication strategy, allows for more frequent personal contact between the organisations, affecting in turn all gaps. While most of these factors have been found as important to trust in other research contexts, the addition here is the unveiling of the mechanisms through which they affect the perception of trustworthiness, through widening or tightening the gaps in the gap-model.

The last aspect of the trust process that was examined was trust between the organisations, in the sense of their **willingness to exchange information** with the other organisations. Based

on the survey data it could be concluded that trust between the organisations was high, not surprisingly, given that the trustworthiness was also perceived so positively. Indeed, the trustworthiness and trust were found to correlate significantly with one another. The willingness to accept information from the counterparty was slightly higher than the willingness to disclose information to the counterpart, proving that trust is indeed task dependent. If you trust a trustee when they provide you with information, it does not automatically mean you will trust them when you need to offer them information. From the interviews, the link between trustworthiness and trust was disentangled in more detail. Three types of information were distinguished: mandatory, optional, and prohibited. Sharing these kinds of information is accompanied by different levels of risks. *Mandatory information* is shared with little risk, since it is shared in standard documents, on a day-to-day basis, and is part of the main tasks. Not sharing the information would be a greater risk for the trustor, who then would be guilty of neglecting their tasks. According to the respondents, this information will be shared irrespective of a positive or negative perception of the trustworthiness of the counterpart. However, when the *ability* is not perceived adequately, the sharing of this information might be associated with feelings of unease. Moreover, while the provider of the information is sharing mandatory information, the *ability* of the provider can be judged, depending on the correctness, completeness, and timeliness of the information.

Sharing *optional information* holds a greater risk, since it takes time that could be contributed to mandatory tasks, but it also happens in a less standardised and thus less predictable way. The receiver might misinterpret the information or not be open to listen to this additional information. The respondents declared that a willingness to share optional information depends mainly on the perceived *benevolence* of that counterpart. A trustee's open attitude, a willingness to listen, and a willingness to reciprocate the optional information sharing will increase the chances that optional information will be shared to them. Correspondingly, during the act of providing optional information, the *benevolence* of the provider can be evaluated, by assessing the openness, and reciprocity of the way this information is shared.

*Prohibited information* is the riskiest to share, because it is shared only infrequently, the reaction of the counterpart will be difficult to predict, and the provider becomes vulnerable to possible sanctions. The willingness to share prohibited information is related especially to the positive assessment of the counterpart's integrity. The trustee should understand the value that sharing this kind of information can have for reaching the shared goal. When the trustee values strictly keeping to the law and not crossing any lines, chances are this will not be the right person to disclose this information too. Furthermore, the trustor should be certain that the counterpart

would handle the information discreetly, and not expose the trustor to possible sanction by telling others about it. The act of sharing prohibited information will make it possible for the counterpart to assess the integrity of the provider, since this is a display of the values of the provider, and of their care in handling confidential information. This is summarised in Table 27.

*Table 27 The three types of information, each requiring and signalling different dimensions of trustworthiness*

	<b>Risk/Vulnerability</b> (for the provider)	<b>Requires</b> (from the receiver)	<b>Signals</b> (to the receiver)
<b>Mandatory information</b> (need to share)	Low	(Ability)	Ability
<b>Optional information</b> (nice to share)	Medium	Benevolence	Benevolence
<b>Prohibited information</b> (shouldn't share)	High	Integrity	Integrity

This last finding regarding the sharing of prohibited information when the integrity of the counterpart is assured exposes a sensitivity within the judicial system concerning trust. While trust has many advantages, it has also many known disadvantages (see Oomsels et al. (2016) for a broader discussion on this in the administrative and judicial context). It becomes clear that trust is not something that should be achieved to the extreme level, and that a slight amount of distrust might be beneficial to ensure other important values needed for a well-functioning justice system, namely the right to privacy and legal protection, and having sufficient checks and balances between the different powerful actors. In addition, trust of the client in the members of the care organisations is also important, since clients can only be helped when they feel they can share their worries without the fear these will be used against them in a court of law one day.

## 9.2 Reflections on the study design

Finding an appropriate research methodology for answering the research questions proved to be a challenge of its own. The trust field is still at an early stage of developing fitting data collection methods that can be applied in different contexts, let alone in a judicial context. The preliminary study was of great help to make some firm decisions about what approach would be most successful in this context. Ultimately, a mixed-method approach was applied combining qualitative and quantitative research method. The largest part of the data originated from in-depth interviews with those sharing information across the borders of their organisation, and a smaller part of the data originated from an interorganisational survey,

asking the respondents about their opinions on statements regarding their five counterpart organisations. Both data sources provided different insights in the steps of the universal trust process.

The interviewing method was especially useful to explore the field, given the rudimentary state of knowledge on interorganisational trust in a judicial setting. It was not yet possible to develop relevant testable hypothesis about how the trust process would work in a judicial context. The main advantages of interviewing were (1) the collection of in-depth information about the topic little prior knowledge existed about, (2) the willingness for a respondent to cooperate, because of the personal aspect connected to trust, and (3) the possibility for the respondent to nuance their answers. However, there were some limitations to the approach as well. First, it was not always clear whether the respondent talked about trust in the same way this was defined in the theory. In retrospect, certain situations the respondents described could be labelled as distrustful situations, in the sense that risk was avoided based on negative expectations. However, since most negative expectations were due to organisational constraints rather than individual incompetence, the respondents were reluctant to label these experiences as distrust, because this felt as labelling a counterpart individual as untrustworthy by nature. Therefore, it is possible more experiences of distrust were present, but these were not detected. One solution could be to avoid the use of the terms trust and distrust, and talk only about positive expectations, and willingness to be vulnerable. The researcher should then be the one labelling the experiences according to the predefined definitions. Additionally, the same advice counts for the development of survey items. However, this should be approached with care, since not disclosing to the respondents that the focus of the study is trust, could impair the informed consent.

Second, while choosing respondent from five out of the 13 judicial divisions was beneficial to getting access to the cases, and to compare experiences from different organisational perspectives, it does decrease the external validity of the study to the whole of the Flemish judicial youth care system. It is not certain that choosing five other embedded cases would have resulted in similar conclusions, however, choosing most-different cases as a sampling technique does decrease the chance that the five embedded case will be representative of the other cases.

Third, the data had a richness of information that has not been fully explored, mostly due to the large amount of interview data that was collected. While larger amounts of data make it possible to detect patterns that are present within all interviews, there is less time left for more in-depth

analysis of the different trust experiences between the different types of respondents, such as by gender, organisation, district, age, or years of experience.

The survey methodology, which came about only after trial and error of several other survey formats, was definitely a useful addition to the study. Survey data leaves less room for the interpretation by the individual researcher, and as such, can triangulate the more subjective interpretations of the researcher by measurements achieved from the standardised scale. Moreover, the comparison over organisations in the network was only possible by survey data. On the other hand, only a limited amount of respondents was included in the sample, and for stronger results, the survey should have been administered to a larger sample. Since the survey required piloting, which was performed together with the earlier interviews, it could not be administered after all 67 interviews. Another limitation is that the survey data is gathered from the same source as the interview data, decreasing its triangulation potential. However, sending out the survey as mail or online survey might have suffered from low response levels because of the sensitive nature of the questions, and the need for trust in the researcher first, making it suffer from its own limitations.

### 9.3 Recommendations for future research

The exploratory research yielded new insights into, on the one hand, the specificities concerning interorganisational trust in a judicial context, and on the other, on the explanatory mechanisms underlying interorganisational trust processes. Much effort was put into explaining the complexities of the trust process in an easily comprehensible manner, so that it can be successfully applied and understood by a broad public. The new perspectives can aid the understanding of why certain trust dynamics exist, and how these work, in a judicial context, but possibly in a much broader context as well. However, these newly developed frameworks, namely the trustworthiness gap model and the information diversification matrix, should be tested in other contexts, to be either validated, or adapted and further developed.

Within the judicial context specifically, what this study has not been able to do, partly due to the little variation that was present in the case, since there was a lack of negative trustworthiness perceptions and distrustful attitudes, is to compare the performance of judicial chains where a general trusting or distrusting attitude prevails. As such, the current study did not investigate whether higher levels of trust do indeed lead to a better functioning network. Since efficiency and effectiveness are not the only goods to strive for in a judicial context, other values such as independence and privacy of the clients, might be better preserved when less trust is present, also contributing to the performance of the system.

What also became clear is that it is difficult to separate trust in an organisation from trust in the members of that organisations, while most likely trust in an organisation is not merely the sum of the attitude towards its members. An interesting path for trust research is to look into the differences between interpersonal trust across organisations, and interorganisational trust.

A last recommendation is that research on information exchange and communication should definitely also consider trust as an important influential factor. While advances have been made in this field, especially when comparing the knowledge sharing processes of tacit and explicit knowledge (Smith, 2001), a differentiation into the forms of explicit knowledge, as was found in this dissertation between mandatory, optional, and prohibited shared information, could be further applied.

#### 9.4 Recommendations for policy and practice

Since the research was focused on one particular case, the judicial youth care chain, the findings are especially relevant for them, however, they could also be expanded to the whole of the judicial system, and several aspects can be retained for interorganisational management in general.

It was observed there is a lot of trust present within the interorganisational relations, which should, according to the theory, lead to a better functioning cooperation between the involved organisations. However, it remains difficult to evaluate whether there is possibly too much or too little trust present in the case, since trust brings about both positive and negative consequences. The willingness to share information between the organisations could very well be responsible for making sure in Flanders all children in alarming situations receive the needed care for their situation. At the same time, the high willingness to share information could conflict with other important legal principles, such as the privacy of the client or the right to an independent ruling by a judge. The balance between desired trust and distrust levels in the system will depend partly on the social and political climate, which can change over time. However, it should not be seen as impossible to get the best of both worlds, where the advantages of high trust are safeguarded, and the possible disadvantages are anticipated on and counteracted. This study should aid exactly in finding a way to achieve this. Further, the findings can contribute to a discussion on the difficult balance between trust and information sharing on the one hand, and other important judicial values such as privacy, independence, and checks and balances. When trust is a desired quality of these interorganisational relations, attention should be paid to counter possible adverse effects of this trust. Specific measures can also be taken to improve the communication strategies of the organisations, to make sure the personnel

management can retain trustworthy individuals in the organisations, to lower the workload of the members, and to adjust the physical proximity between the organisations to the needs of the cooperation.

Policy-makers and practitioners can apply the developed checklist to detect possible gaps present in interorganisational relationships. The study has also contributed to filling in the first row of this checklist, where the qualities that a trustworthy person in this context should possess have been identified in Chapter 6. In addition, the effects of reforms on trust can be better assessed, especially when they influence one of the eight important (inter)organisational factors detected throughout the study.





# Samenvatting in het Nederlands

Dit proefschrift gaat over interorganisationeel vertrouwen in de Vlaamse gerechtelijke jeugdhulpketen. Het proefschrift is het resultaat van een vierjarig onderzoek (2014-2017) gevoerd in het kader van het IAP project *Justice and Populations* (IAP VII/22) gefinancierd door Belspo. De doelstelling van het onderzoek was een beter inzicht krijgen in het vertrouwensproces dat zich afspeelt bij het delen van informatie tussen de betrokken organisaties (jeugdpolitie, OCJ, VK, jeugdparket, jeugdrechtbank, en SDJ). Deze inzichten zijn nodig om de gevoeligheden inzake vertrouwen bij gerechtelijke informatie-uitwisseling te detecteren, en om te begrijpen hoe vertrouwen tot stand kan komen in deze uitdagende context, waar verschillende organisaties behorende tot verschillende beleidsniveaus en beleidsdomeinen worden verplicht om samen te werken om een gemeenschappelijk doel te bereiken, namelijk het beschermen van kinderen in verontrustende situaties. Er is een grote wederzijdse afhankelijkheid, waar de gevolgen voor een gebrekkige samenwerking desastreus kunnen zijn voor een bepaalde jongere, en waar elke schakel in de keten optimaal moet functioneren, willen de anderen hun taken correct kunnen uitvoeren. Maar tegelijkertijd is er weinig grip op elkaars functioneren door de afwezigheid van een hiërarchische relatie.

Om het vertrouwensproces in kaart te brengen werden vier onderzoeksvragen gespecificeerd:

1. Wat is de algemene perceptie van de betrouwbaarheid tussen de leden van de gerechtelijke jeugdhulpketen?
2. Welke eigenschappen dragen bij tot een positieve perceptie van de betrouwbaarheid?
3. Welke context specifieke factoren hebben een invloed op de perceptie van de betrouwbaarheid, en op welke wijze beïnvloedden ze deze perceptie?
4. Wat is de impact van gepercipieerde betrouwbaarheid op de bereidheid om (verplichte, optionele, en verboden) informatie te delen tussen de leden van de gerechtelijke jeugdhulpketen?

Deze vier vragen werden beantwoord aan de hand van een mixed-method dataverzamelingsproces, waarbij kwalitatieve en kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden werden gecombineerd om een zo volledig mogelijk inzicht te krijgen in het vertrouwensproces. Eerst werd een duidelijke afbakening van het onderzoek nagestreefd aan de hand van een verkennend vooronderzoek via interviews, waarbij informatiedeling tussen de organisaties naar voor kwam als de belangrijkste interactie. Verdere interviews met de nieuwe afbakening als leidraad, en

aanvullende informatie uit een vragenlijst, maakten het mogelijk een geïntegreerd antwoord te formuleren op bovenstaande onderzoeksvragen.

Wat betreft de perceptie van betrouwbaarheid die leefde onder de respondenten op het moment van onderzoek kan gesteld worden dat deze overwegend positief was. Dit is een belangrijk gegeven, omdat het enerzijds aantoont dat het mogelijk is een positieve indruk te verkrijgen in een uitdagende context, en anderzijds de achtergrond schetst waarin de overige resultaten tot stand zijn gekomen. De eigenschappen die voornamelijk van belang zijn bij een evaluatie van de betrouwbaarheid konden worden gecategoriseerd naargelang de drie theoretische aspecten van betrouwbaarheid: competentie, welwillendheid, en integriteit. Iemand die competent is in deze context is iemand die complete en correcte informatie deelt op een stipte en efficiënte manier, en goede communicatieve vaardigheden bezit. Welwillendheid wordt beoordeeld aan de hand van de bereidheid tot samenwerking, flexibiliteit, en het niet compliceren tot zelfs het verlichten van andermans taken. Iemand wordt als integer beoordeeld als deze discreet, eerlijk, professioneel, en verantwoordelijk handelt, de juiste prioriteiten heeft, en doordachte beslissingen neemt. Verder kon op basis van de interviews een model worden ontwikkeld waaruit blijkt dat het verkrijgen van een positieve perceptie afhangt van vier concepten en de afstand tussen deze concepten: de trustor's verwachting van hoe de trustee zich *moet* gedragen, de trustor's verwachting van hoe de trustee zich *zal* gedragen, de eigenlijke gedragingen van de trustee, en de trustee's perceptie van hoe hij zich *moet* gedragen. Hoe meer deze factoren samenvallen, hoe groter de kans op een positieve evaluatie van de betrouwbaarheid. Alle vier de factoren kunnen worden bijgesteld om de afstanden te verkleinen.

De contextuele factoren die deze percepties beïnvloeden kunnen worden opgedeeld in organisationele en interorganisationele factoren. De vier organisationele factoren die een rol spelen zijn het communicatiebeleid, het personeelsmanagement, interne controleprocessen, en de werklust. De vier interorganisationele factoren zijn de bepaling van een gedeeld maatschappelijk doel, een duidelijke afbakening van de taakverdeling, de continuïteit van de samenwerking, en de nabijheid van de organisaties. In het proefschrift wordt ook telkens aangegeven op welke afstand tussen bovenstaande aspecten deze factoren een invloed hebben, door ze te vergroten of verkleinen.

Ten slotte, betreffende de invloed van de betrouwbaarheid op het vertrouwen tussen de organisaties, specifiek met betrekking tot het delen van informatie, valt ten eerste op dat dit vertrouwen hoog is, in lijn met de eerder beschreven positieve inschatting van elkaars betrouwbaarheid. Verder komt naar voor dat de bereidheid tot delen van de drie verschillende

types van informatie, de verplichte, optionele, en verboden informatie, gepaard gaat met een verschillende gradatie in risico en kwetsbaarheid, en kan gelinkt worden aan de verschillende aspecten van betrouwbaarheid. Zo zal een bereidheid tot delen van verplichte informatie in principe altijd aanwezig zijn, maar zal met een geruster gemoed gebeuren wanneer de competentie van de tegenpartij hoog wordt ingeschat. Verder signaleert het delen van verplichte informatie aan de ontvanger hoe competent de zender is, afhankelijk van de correctheid, volledigheid, en stiptheid van de informatie. De bereidheid tot het delen van optionele informatie wordt als risicovoller beschouwd en zal voornamelijk aanwezig zijn als de welwillendheid van de tegenpartij positief wordt ingeschat. Gelijkaardig zal ook het delen van dergelijke informatie de tegenpartij informeren over de welwillendheid van de zender. Ten slotte zal het delen van verboden informatie, informatie die wettelijk gezien niet zou mogen worden gedeeld maar een zaak wel erg vooruit kan helpen, veel risico inhouden en vooral aanwezig zijn als de integriteit van de tegenpartij hoog wordt ingeschat. Ook zal het delen van deze informatie veel zeggen over de integriteit van de zender van deze informatie. De vraag rijst hierbij dan ook wat wenselijk is inzake de hoeveelheid vertrouwen tussen (de leden van) de organisaties en de informatiedeling die er tussen plaatsvindt.

Deze studie heeft verschillende implicaties, zowel voor verder onderzoek als voor het beleid. Ten eerste geven de ontwikkelde conceptuele modellen een nieuwe kijk op het vertrouwensproces, en kunnen deze binnen andere contexten worden gevalideerd of gefalsificeerd. Ook methodologisch is dankzij de ontwikkeling van een interorganisationele vragenlijst aangetoond hoe vertrouwen in een interorganisationele context kan worden gemeten, rekening houdend met de verschillende relaties binnen het netwerk.

Ook beleidsmakers en mensen uit de praktijk kunnen gebruik maken van deze resultaten. Via de ontwikkelde checklist kan worden nagegaan of er belangrijke afstanden bestaan tussen de verschillende aspecten die een positieve perceptie van de betrouwbaarheid verhinderen. Er kan beter worden ingeschat hoe hervormingen een invloed kunnen hebben op het vertrouwen tussen de organisaties. Verder kan er worden nagedacht in hoeverre vertrouwen een wenselijk aspect is binnen de interorganisationele relaties, en indien wenselijk, hoe de nadelige effecten van hoog vertrouwen kunnen worden gecounterd op (inter)organisationeel niveau. Concreet kan bijvoorbeeld worden nagedacht over het verbeteren van de communicatie strategieën, het organiseren van het personeelsbeleid zodanig dat betrouwbare individuen behouden worden in de organisatie, het verlagen van de werkdruk, en de fysieke afstand tussen organisaties aanpassen aan de noden van de coöperatie.



## Summary in English

This dissertation focuses on interorganisational trust in the Flemish judicial youth care chain. It is the result of a four year research project (2014-2017), part of the IAP project *Justice and Populations* (IAP VII/22), funded by Belspo. The goal of the study was to obtain a better understanding of the trust process at play when sharing information between the organisations involved in judicial youth care (juvenile police, OCJ, VK, juvenile OM, juvenile court, and SDJ). This is a challenging context since different organisations from different policy levels and policy domains are forced to cooperate to reach a common goal, namely the protection of children in alarming situations. There is mutual interdependency between the organisations, with possible disastrous consequences for minors when one organisation malfunctions and cooperation fails. At the same time, due to the lack of a hierarchical relation between the organisations, there is little control over the functioning of the others. Therefore, insights in trust experiences are needed to detect the possible issues surrounding trust in information sharing in a judicial context, and to understand how trust can emerge in this challenging context.

To map out the trust process four research questions were specified:

1. *What* is the general perception of the trustworthiness of the members of the judicial youth care chain?
2. *What* qualities, in the context of the judicial youth care chain, make a member to be perceived as trustworthy?
3. *What* context specific inputs influence the perception of trustworthiness, and *how* do they increase or decrease trustworthiness?
4. *What* is the impact of perceived trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, and integrity) of an organisation on the willingness to exchange *mandatory, optional, or prohibited information* with the members of that organisation?

An answer to these four research questions was sought by applying a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, to obtain a deep insight into the trust process. First, the focus of the research was established by performing a preliminary exploratory investigation by means of semi-structured interviewing. During this exploration information sharing was detected as the main interaction taking place between the organisations. Further more focussed interviewing, and data gathered with an interorganisational network survey, enabled finding a comprehensive answer to the above research questions.

It was established that the perceptions of trustworthiness between the members of the different organisations at the time of investigation were predominantly positive. This is an important finding since on the one hand, it shows that despite the challenging context there is a possibility to obtain positive perceptions of one another, and on the other hand, it shows what the context was in which the remaining findings originated. The characteristics that are especially looked at when assessing the trustworthiness are categorised according to the three main aspects of trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, and integrity. The ability is perceived well when trustees share correct and complete information, in a timely and efficient manner, and possess good communicative skills. A trustee is perceived as benevolent when they show a willingness to cooperate, are flexible, and try to facilitate, or at least not complicate, the other's work. The integrity is assessed base on the discretion, honesty, professionalism, and responsibility, on having the right priorities in mind, and taking conscientious decisions. Next to this, a gap model has been developed based on a deeper analysis of the interviews, which shows that a positive perception of trustworthiness depends on the distance between four interrelated concepts. They are the trustor's expectations of how a trustee *should* behave, the trustor's expectations about how a trustee *will* behave, the actual behaviour of the trustee, and the expectations of the trustee of how he/she *should* behave. The more these aspects coincide, the higher the chance for a positive evaluation of the trustworthiness. The trustworthiness can be better perceived by decreasing the gaps between each of these aspects.

The contextual inputs that influence the trustworthiness perception can be divided into organisational and interorganisational input factors. The four organisational factors are the communication strategy, the personnel management, the internal control processes, and the workload. The interorganisational factors are the stipulation of a shared goal, the separation of duties, the continuity of cooperation, and the proximity between the organisations. Throughout the dissertation, it is also made clear how these factors influence the perception, by their effects on the above-mentioned gaps.

Finally, regarding the influence of perceived trustworthiness on trust between the organisations, specifically concerning information sharing, it is noticed that the levels of trust are predominantly high, in line with the largely positive perception of the trustworthiness. Through in-depth analysis of the interviews, it is detected that sharing the three types of information; mandatory, optional, and prohibited information; is associated with different levels of vulnerabilities and risks, and can be linked to the three different aspects of trustworthiness. Sharing *mandatory* information is seen as a low risk interaction, and will essentially always take place, irrespective of the perception of trustworthiness. However, when

the *ability* of the counterpart is perceived well, this will be shared more comfortably. Moreover, during the act of sharing mandatory information, the *ability* of the sender of the information can be assessed by the receiver, which will serve as new input to the receiver for the next interaction between these two parties. The willingness to share *optional* information is seen as medium risk and will mainly depend on the assessment of the counterpart's *benevolence*. Similarly, the sharing of optional information will be a source for the receiver on which to base the assessment of the *benevolence* of the sender. The sharing of *prohibited* information, is seen as a high risk interaction, and will depend mainly on the perception of the *integrity* of the counterpart. When sharing this type of information, also the *integrity* of the sender can be assessed.

This study has several implications, for further research as well as for policy. First, the developed conceptual models, the gap-model and the information typology model, will need to be tested in other contexts, where they can be validated, or falsified and further developed. Second, the methodological development of an interorganisational survey contributes to the further development of trust research, where there are still many opportunities for improvement. For policy-makers and practitioners, the checklist proposed to evaluate the trustworthiness gaps can be applied to detect possible gaps present in interorganisational relationships. In addition, the effect of reforms on trust can be better assessed, especially when they influence one of the eight important (inter)organisational factors detected throughout the study. Further, the findings can contribute to a discussion on the difficult balance between trust and information sharing on the one hand, and other important judicial values such as privacy, independence, and checks and balances. When trust is a desired quality of these interorganisational relations, attention should be paid to counter possible adverse effects of trust. Specific measures can also be taken to improve the communication strategies of the organisations, to make sure the personnel management retains trustworthy individuals in the organisations, to lower the workload of the members, and to adjust the physical proximity between the organisations to the needs of the cooperation.





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# Appendix

## A. Interview characteristics

Nº	ID code	Organisation	Division	Size	Function	Date	Length
1	A	Juvenile court	1	Medium	Registrar	4/04/2014	0:58:47
2	B	OM	1	Medium	Secretary	17/04/2014	1:40:48
3	C	OM	1	Medium	Magistrate	17/04/2014	0:48:28
4	D	OM	1	Medium	Magistrate	17/04/2014	1:15:49
5	E	OM	1	Medium	Crown prosecutor	24/04/2014	1:34:15
6	F	Juvenile court	1	Medium	Juvenile Judge	24/04/2014	0:57:02
7	G	Juvenile court	1	Medium	Juvenile Judge	13/05/2014	0:59:35
8	H	OM	1	Medium	Criminologist	24/05/2014	1:18:18
9	I	VK	2	Medium	Coordinator	3/04/2015	0:50:41
10	J	VK	2	Medium	Counsellor	3/04/2015	1:31:33
11	K	OCJ	2	Medium	Counsellor	11/03/2015	1:31:01
12	L	Juvenile police	2	Medium	Inspector	1/04/2015	1:27:26
13	M	OM	2	Medium	Magistrate	26/03/2015	1:44:16
14	N	Juvenile court	2	Medium	Juvenile Judge	7/04/2015	1:13:42
15	O	SDJ	2	Medium	Counsellor	17/03/2015	0:49:16
16	P	SDJ	2	Medium	Counsellor	17/03/2015	0:45:53
17	Q	SDJ	2	Medium	Counsellor	17/03/2015	0:50:19
18	R	SDJ	2	Medium	Team leader	17/03/2015	1:45:30
19	S	OM	1	Medium	Criminologist	16/01/2015	1:19:02
20	T	OM	1	Medium	Secretary	16/01/2015	0:58:24
21	U	OM	1	Medium	Secretary	16/01/2015	0:44:27
22	V	Juvenile police	1	Medium	Assistant	28/04/2015	1:26:41
23	W	Juvenile police	1	Medium	Inspector	28/04/2015	1:35:08
24	X	VK	1	Medium	Counsellor	11/05/2015	1:46:21
25	Y	VK	1	Medium	Counsellor	11/05/2015	1:02:12
26	Z	Juvenile court	1	Medium	Juvenile Judge	12/05/2015	1:06:02
27	AA	Juvenile court	1	Medium	Juvenile Judge	12/05/2015	1:06:02
28	AB	OM	1	Medium	Magistrate	12/05/2015	1:28:01
29	AC	OCJ	1	Medium	Counsellor	10/08/2015	1:28:01
30	AD	OCJ	1	Medium	Counsellor	4/09/2015	1:10:36
31	AE	SDJ	1	Medium	Counsellor	8/09/2015	1:34:00
32	AF	SDJ	1	Medium	Team leader	8/09/2015	1:23:44
33	AG	Juvenile police	3	Small	Inspector	5/02/2016	1:23:03
34	AH	Juvenile police	4	Medium	Inspector	8/02/2016	2:40:56
35	AI	OM	5	Large	Magistrate	11/02/2016	0:57:44
36	AJ	OM	3	Small	Criminologist	15/02/2016	1:22:14
37	AK	OCJ	4	Medium	Team leader	17/02/2016	0:58:21
38	AL	OCJ	4	Medium	Counsellor	17/02/2016	1:00:45
39	AM	OM	5	Large	Criminologist	18/02/2016	0:58:05

40	AN	SDJ	5	Large	Counsellor	18/02/2016	0:43:35
41	AO	VK	5	Large	Counsellor	19/02/2016	1:37:19
42	AP	OCJ	3	Small	Counsellor	22/02/2016	1:03:56
43	AQ	SDJ	3	Small	Counsellor	22/02/2016	1:03:45
44	AR	VK	5	Large	Counsellor	26/02/2016	1:10:58
45	AS	OCJ	5	Large	Counsellor	29/02/2016	0:48:07
46	AT	OCJ	5	Large	Counsellor	29/02/2016	0:39:13
47	AU	SDJ	4	Medium	Team leader	2/03/2016	1:17:22
48	AV	SDJ	4	Medium	Counsellor	2/03/2016	1:00:03
49	AW	Juvenile police	4	Medium	Inspector	2/03/2016	0:34:42
50	AX	OM	5	Large	Magistrate	3/03/2016	0:57:47
51	AY	VK	4	Medium	Counsellor	7/03/2016	0:52:44
52	AZ	VK	4	Medium	Coordinator	7/03/2016	0:42:00
53	BA	Juvenile court	5	Large	Juvenile Judge	8/03/2016	1:12:28
54	BB	Juvenile court	6	Small	Juvenile Judge	9/03/2016	0:49:33
55	BC	Juvenile court	6	Small	Juvenile Judge	9/03/2016	0:49:33
56	BD	OM	5	Large	Magistrate	10/03/2016	No record
57	BE	OM	3	Small	Magistrate	11/03/2016	No record
58	BF	OM	3	Small	Magistrate	11/03/2016	1:47:30
59	BG	OM	4	Medium	Magistrate	14/03/2016	0:45:00
60	BH	OM	4	Medium	Criminologist	14/03/2016	0:57:57
61	BI	Juvenile court	5	Large	Juvenile Judge	15/03/2016	1:33:37
62	BJ	SDJ	3	Small	Counsellor	17/03/2016	1:09:12
63	BK	VK	3	Small	Counsellor	17/03/2016	1:15:38
64	BL	VK	3	Small	Counsellor	17/03/2016	1:27:24
65	BM	Juvenile court	4	Medium	Juvenile Judge	18/03/2016	0:42:01
66	BN	Juvenile court	4	Medium	Juvenile Judge	18/03/2016	1:12:07
67	BO	Juvenile court	3	Small	Juvenile Judge	26/04/2016	Phone



## B. The final coding scheme

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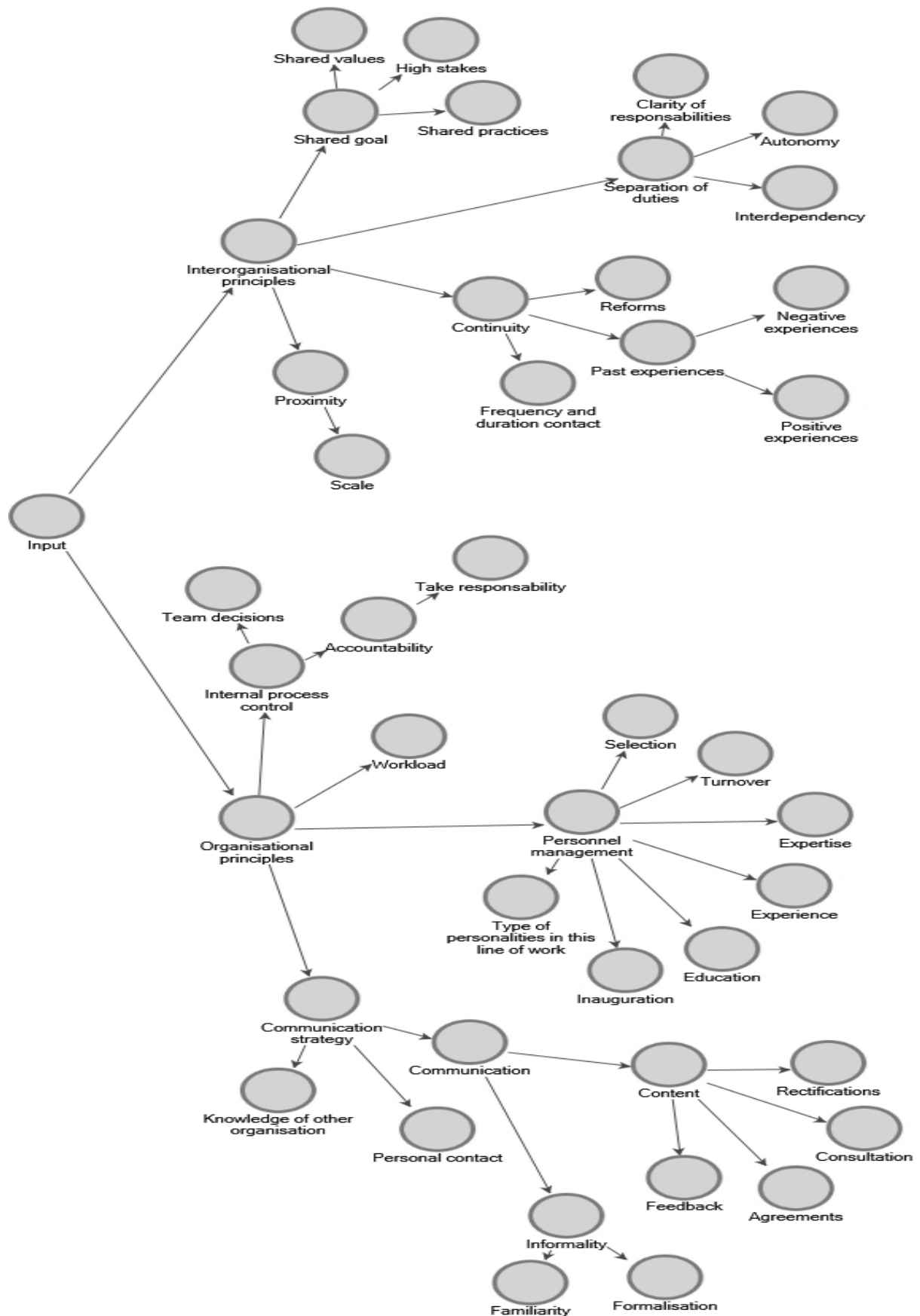
### Coding scheme

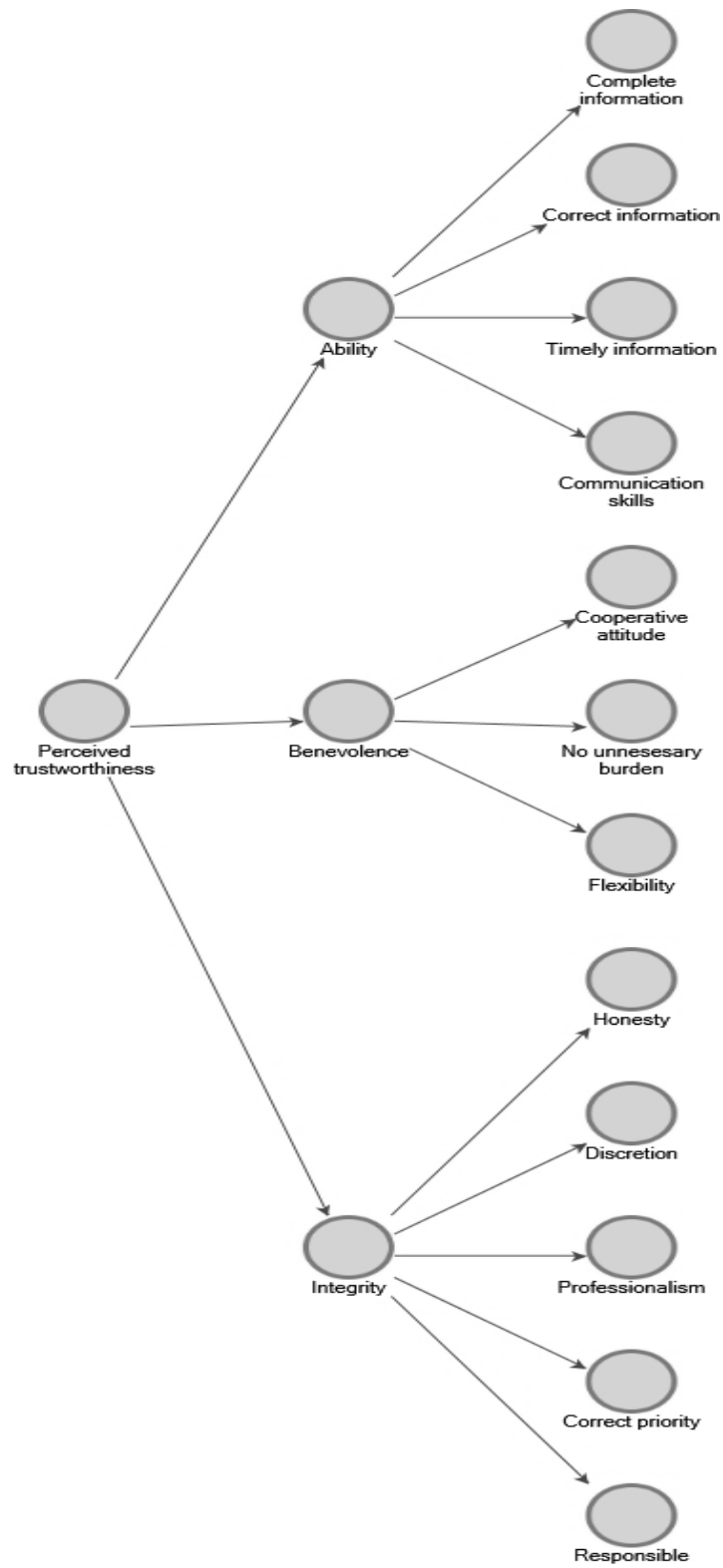
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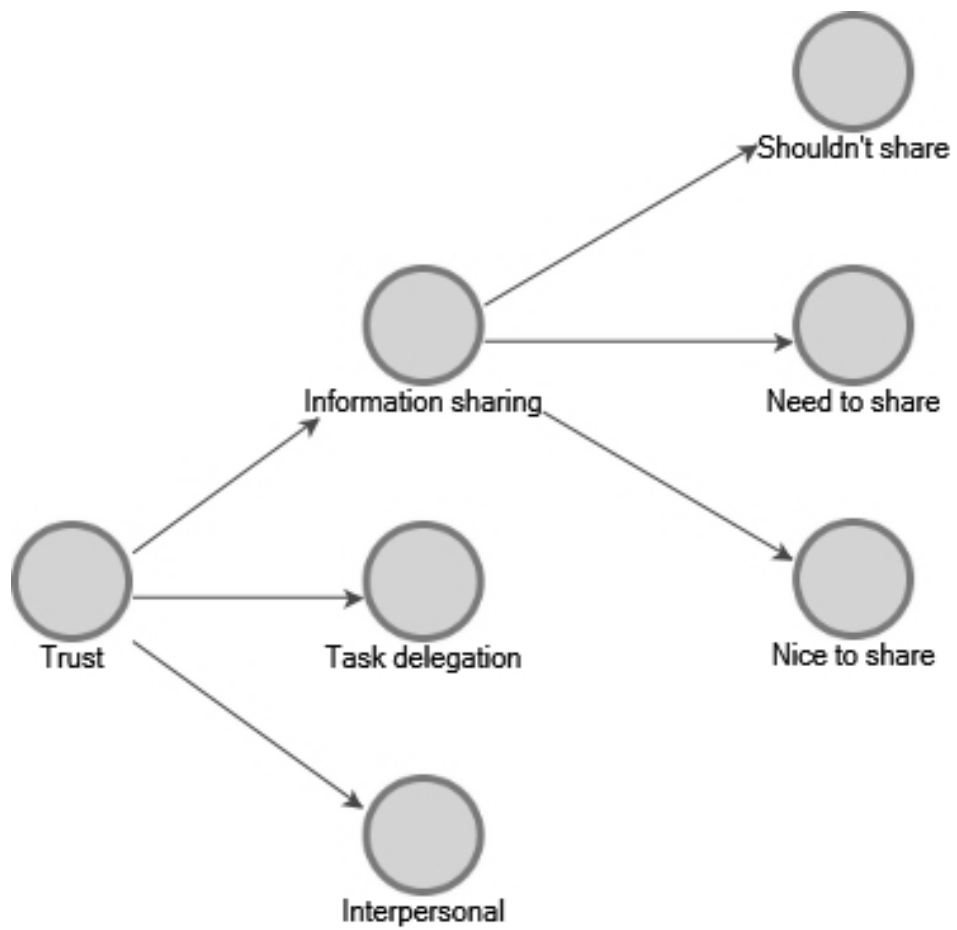
- ❖ Trust
  - Task delegation
  - Urgent situation
  - Interpersonal
  - Information sharing
    - Shouldn't share
    - Nice to share
    - Need to share
- ❖ Perceived trustworthiness
  - Integrity
    - Responsible
    - Professionalism
    - Honesty
    - Discretion
    - Correct priority
  - Benevolence
    - No unnecessary burden
    - Flexibility
    - Cooperative attitude
    - Accessibility
  - Ability
    - Timely information
    - Correct information
    - Complete information
    - Communication skills
- ❖ Input
  - Organisational principles
    - Workload
    - Personnel management
      - Type of personalities in this line of work
      - Turnover
      - Selection
      - Inauguration
      - Expertise
      - Experience
      - Education
    - Internal process control
      - Team decisions
      - Accountability
      - Take responsibility
    - Communication strategy

- Personal contact
  - Knowledge of other organisation
  - Communication
    - ◆ Informality
      - Formalisation
      - Familiarity
    - ◆ Content
      - Rectifications
      - Feedback
      - Consultation
      - Agreements
  - Interorganisational principles
    - Shared goal
      - Shared values
      - Shared practices
      - High stakes
    - Separation of duties
      - Interdependency
      - Coping strategy
      - Clarity of responsibilities
      - Autonomy
    - Proximity
      - Scale
    - Continuity
      - Reforms
      - Past experiences
        - ◆ Positive experiences
        - ◆ Negative experiences
      - Frequency and duration contact
  - ❖ Information sharing process
    - Shouldn't share
    - Nice to share
    - Need to share
  - ❖ Deleted nodes
    - Risk society
    - Rejuvenation
    - Flexibility
    - External control process
    - Digitalisation
    - Deontology
    - Common enemy
    - Boundary spanner
-

### C. Mind maps generated during thematic analysis







D. The (translated) format of the survey

1. With which of the following organisations do you exchange information on cases of alarming situations? (as sender or receiver of information) [check off]
2. The following organisation does the best they can to execute their tasks in alarming situations.
3. The following organisation possesses sufficient capacity and knowledge to execute these tasks.
4. The following organisation is generally willing to help me when needed.
5. The following organisation does not hinder me in my task execution.
6. The following organisation has a strong will to bring each case to a successful conclusion.
7. Sound principles guide the other organisations behaviour.
8. I easily share case information with the following organisation.
9. I easily accept case information of the following organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Completely agree	Not applicable

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
OCJ									
VK									
OM									
Court									
SDJ									

## E. Assumption testing for ANOVA

The normality assumption can be tested with the Shapiro-Wilk's test. The distribution should not differ significantly from the normal distribution, meaning the Shapiro-Wilk's statistic should not give significant results (probability should be higher than 0,05).

### For trustor organisation

Tests of Normality							
	Target Organisation	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Trustworthiness	Police	,239	12	,056	,840	12	,028
	OCJ	,144	22	,200	,948	22	,285
	VK	,138	28	,187	,908	28	,018
	OM	,129	45	,058	,931	45	,010
	Court	,109	27	,200	,928	27	,063
	SDJ	,165	20	,155	,951	20	,375
Ability scale	Police	,215	12	,132	,842	12	,029
	OCJ	,212	22	,011	,895	22	,023
	VK	,212	28	,002	,910	28	,019
	OM	,189	45	,000	,870	45	,000
	Court	,199	27	,007	,876	27	,004
	SDJ	,193	20	,049	,880	20	,018
Benevolence scale	Police	,446	12	,000	,592	12	,000
	OCJ	,216	22	,009	,926	22	,103
	VK	,264	27	,000	,875	27	,004
	OM	,186	45	,000	,856	45	,000
	Court	,185	27	,018	,826	27	,000
	SDJ	,236	20	,005	,896	20	,035
Integrity scale	Police	,499	12	,000	,465	12	,000
	OCJ	,201	22	,022	,888	22	,017
	VK	,293	28	,000	,849	28	,001
	OM	,278	45	,000	,838	45	,000
	Court	,213	27	,003	,868	27	,003
	SDJ	,160	20	,191	,938	20	,224

### For trustee organisation

Tests of Normality							
	Trustee Organisation	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Trustworthiness	Police	,167	29	,038	,969	29	,525
	OCJ	,094	26	,200	,957	26	,331
	VK	,220	23	,005	,903	23	,029
	OM	,160	25	,099	,933	25	,102
	Court	,136	21	,200	,929	21	,129
	SDJ	,117	30	,200	,943	30	,113
Ability scale	Police	,144	29	,127	,943	29	,122
	OCJ	,232	26	,001	,861	26	,002
	VK	,152	23	,178	,946	23	,245
	OM	,252	25	,000	,842	25	,001
	COURT	,192	21	,041	,862	21	,007
	SDJ	,184	30	,011	,864	30	,001
Benevolence scale	Police	,197	29	,005	,896	29	,008
	OCJ	,182	26	,026	,910	26	,026
	VK	,156	23	,153	,958	23	,433
	OM	,235	25	,001	,880	25	,007
	COURT	,228	20	,008	,877	20	,016
	SDJ	,212	30	,001	,878	30	,003
Integrity scale	Police	,244	29	,000	,925	29	,040
	OCJ	,192	26	,014	,935	26	,103
	VK	,211	23	,009	,872	23	,007
	OM	,191	25	,019	,882	25	,008
	COURT	,200	21	,028	,840	21	,003
	SDJ	,216	30	,001	,867	30	,001

When performing an ANOVA analysis, there needs to be homogeneity of variances. This assumption is tested using Levene's test for homogeneity of variances. When the Levene statistic is not significant, this means there is no significant heterogeneity of variances, which means the assumption is met.



### For trustor organisation

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Ability scale	,508	5	148	,770
Benevolence scale	2,794	5	147	,019
Integrity scale	4,460	5	148	,001
Trustworthiness scale	,948	5	148	,452

### For trustee organisation

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Ability scale	,919	5	148	,470
Benevolence scale	6,58	5	147	,656
Integrity scale	,605	5	148	,696
Trustworthiness scale	,511	5	148	,768

## F. Assumption testing for point-biserial correlation

### Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality

#### For trust in providing information

Tests of Normality							
	Trust Providing Binary	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Trustworthiness	Less than agree	,144	40	,037	,935	40	,023
	(completely) agree	,104	104	,007	,954	104	,001

#### For trust in receiving information

Tests of Normality							
	Trust Receiving Binary	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Trustworthiness	Less than agree	,317	13	,001	,795	13	,006
	(completely) agree	,109	130	,001	,955	130	,000

### Levene's test of equality of variances

#### For trust in providing information

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Trustworthiness	1,620	1	142	,205

#### For trust in receiving information

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Trustworthiness	18,766	1	141	,000

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